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Mega POWER

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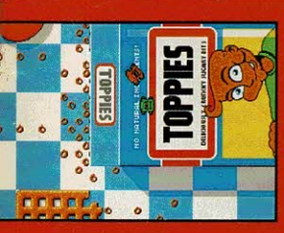

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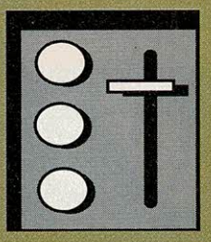

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MEGA POWER
august 1993

cover story
The cult phenomenon of the SNES smashes onto the Mega Drive. We look forward to The Lost Vikings' winter release.

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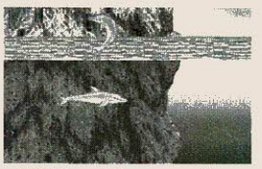

100% ambience as Ecco CD gets a rehaul.
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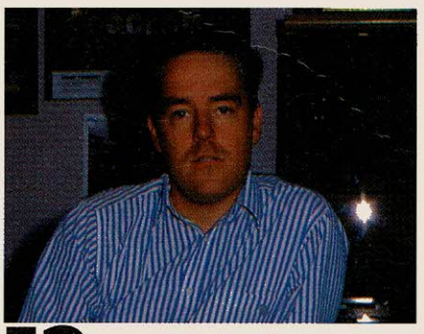

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This man has brought you the most violent game ever.

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After months in development, their Sega releases are here!

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PRESS start

It's always difficult knowing what to write in the first editorial of a magazine. After weeks bashing away at the keyboard, we're hardly in a position to comment on MEGA POWER. At the end of the day, you're the only ones who can tell us whether it's good or not. What I can tell you is what we were aiming for when we wrote and designed this issue.

Everyone here has worked on a Sega mag before. When we sat down to get started on MEGA POWER, we wanted to produce something completely different. Over the past few years, Mega Drive mags have proliferated at a frightening rate, and because publishers have just chucked out mags to exploit the rapidly growing market, the mags have cloned each other. I could go through each page of MEGA POWER and point out why we think it's different, but I think you'll find it more fun to go through this issue yourself. The look and feel of MEGA POWER is designed to reflect the maturing Sega market, we hope it applies to you.

As you read through MEGA POWER, you'll notice a few familiar names cropping up. If you haven't heard of us before, here's who we are and what we've done...

dominic handy

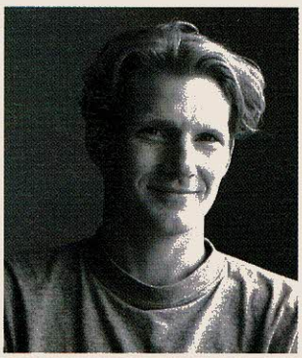
dave perry

Dave's called the designer but he's much, much more. He's comes to MEGA POWER after 17 months hard labour on our sister magazine, SEGAPRO. The Kid, as he likes to be called, claims to be the world's first unstoppable gamesplaying animal – and every month Dave'll be challenging the games industry's top PR people at their own games. The diminutive Dave is also a regular guest on TV shows like GamesMaster and Games World, after helping to set up to first series of GamesMaster.

His gamesplaying knowledge goes all the way back to the early days of the Amiga, when he could be found designing and writing Special Reserve's roleplaying fanzine Confidential.

This month Dave brutalises *Muhammad Ali* and has the enviable task of reviewing *J League*.

steve bough



Out of us all, Steve's the only one with any media qualifications (as he constantly reminds us). He's the guy behind the bulk of the reviews and tips, but still isn't happy if a day goes by without a round on *PGA Tour Golf II*. Steve joins MEGA POWER after helping create the launch issue of SEGA XS magazine. Many months mapping massive Sega games has put Steve in good stead for the incisive reviews of MEGA POWER.

He first got bitten by the game bug way back in the halcyon days of the ZX81, quoting *Graham Gooch's Cricket* as the first game he ever played. This month Steve's progressed a bit from *Gooch's* and tackles the likes of *Ecco* and *Batman Returns* on CD and Domark's *F1*.

dominic handy

Dom started out life as an occasional reviewer on that old Spectrum mag, Crash. From those humble beginnings, he has contributed to a diverse portfolio of publications from Movie magazine to The Games Machine. More recently, he helped llaunch the award-winning SEGAPRO, and from there has been instrumental in pioneering innovative publications like SEGA XS and SUPER XS.

His Sega qualifications are unquestionable. He cowrote the first Sega tips and reviews paperback, The Complete Sega Solution, and is currently working on a Sega compendium. This issue he tackles top games like *Techno Clash* and *Bill Walsh*, brings you the exclusive preview of *The Lost Vikings*, and chats to Datel Electronics.

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POWER N

SEASIDE REALITY

W Industries, a Leicester-based company, has won a £3.5 million contract to develop games for Sega's arcade division. The virtual reality arcade games have already been installed in the Trocadero in central London. The contract won by W Industries will ensure the development of games for Sega World. Sega are launching these theme arcades all over Europe with the first Sega World being opened in Bournemouth on 24 July.

The deal is said to be worth £3.5 million for the first two years, and from then £1.3 million each year for just licensing the machines. With the considerable growth in W Industries over the past few years, the company are looking to expand to the Japanese market. They're hoping to develop virtual reality exercise bikes for the Japanese electronics giant Matsushita. The idea is that as users pedal, they will see a computer-generated world in their headsets!

The first Sega World opens in Bournemouth (about 200 yards from the MEGA POWER offices!) on 24 July. As we write, in early July, the whole place is still full of rubble, so someone's going to have to perform a few miracles to pull this one off.

SONIC FLYING HIGH

Sega have announced a collaboration with Japanese Airlines (JAL). The plan is to install Game Gears for each seat on most flights in an aim to improve customer happiness. However, reports in the broadsheet press recently have detailed attempts by pilots to ban such electronic games, phones, personal stereos, etc, from all flights because they reckon they interfere with their instruments.

British Calendonian have already introduced Game Gears for hire on some of their flights, so it will be interesting to see just how high Sonic will fly. (Perhaps on the next space shuttle?)

WONDERKIND

To coincide with the release of the Mega Drive 2, JVC have just launched the WonderMega RG-M2 in Japan. Like the original, it allows both cart and CD play, but the new version comes complete with infra-red joypads allowing users to play four-player games without the use of the four-player tap. (We've yet to see it work, though!)

The new machine also comes with improved karaoke facilities, still making it great fun at parties.

The original WonderMega was never released outside of Japan, and it looks like JVC will be keeping this one to themselves also.

Four players and no wires with the new JVC controllers.

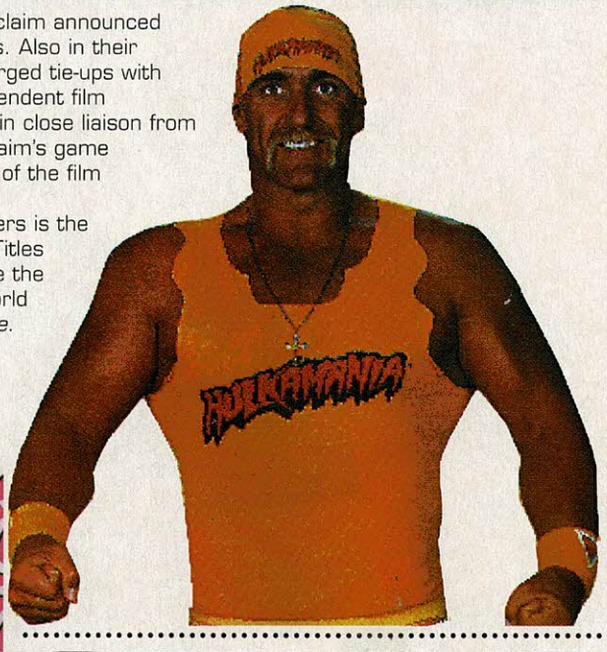
JVC's Wonder Mega – what the Mega Drive 2 should have been.

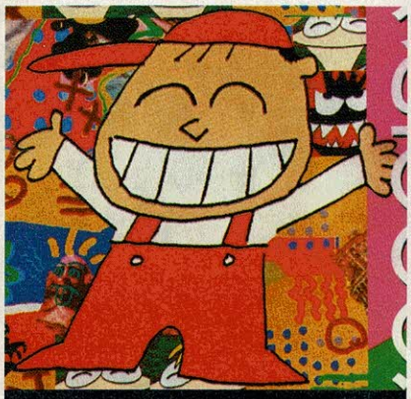
NEWS

ACCLAIM TERMINATED!

At the recent CES show in Chicago, Acclaim announced European distribution with Virgin Games. Also in their release was the news that they have forged tie-ups with James (Terminator 2) Cameron's independent film company. The two companies will work in close liaison from pre-production to completion, with Acclaim's game developers having access to every part of the film spectrum.

The other relevant news for gamesplayers is the news of Acclaim's future CD releases. Titles to be published for the Mega-CD include the eagerly-awaited *Mortal Kombat* and World Wrestling Federation's *Rage in the Cage*. The release dates have not yet been finalised, but it's expected that *Rage in the Cage* will be released this autumn and *Mortal Kombat* next spring.





ARE THEY KIDDING?

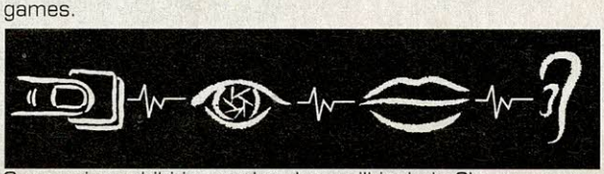
Sega Japan have just announced the launch of a kid's console aimed at users aged from 3-8 years. The 16-bit machine, called the Pico, will run cartridges which contain digital books. These stories will stop occasionally to ask questions, which can be answered with a light pen. The idea behind Sega's marketing strategy is for the Pico to be a child's first console, and from there for them to be introduced to the Mega Drive and Mega-CD.

News is that we may be seeing this high-tech piece of electronic wizardry in Europe next year.

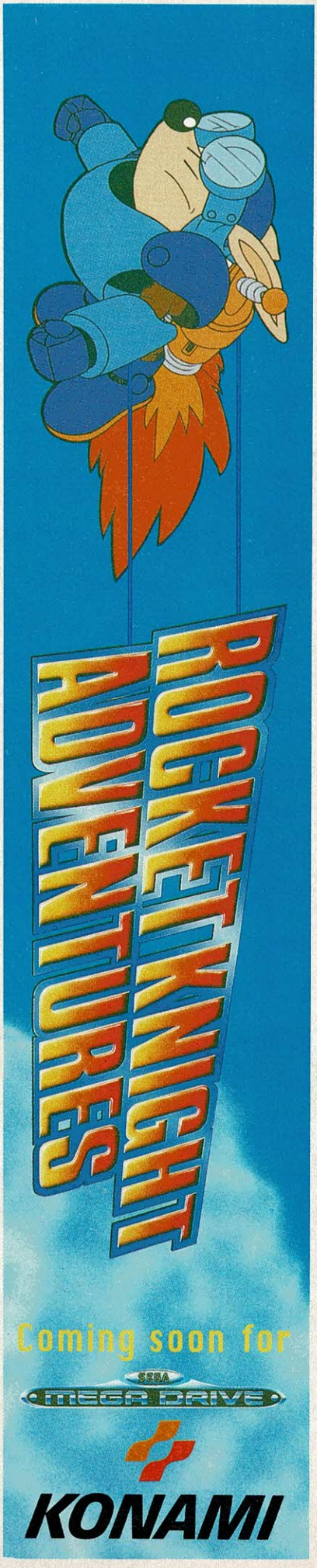
STAYING ALIVE

The UK equivalent of America's CES is set to launch at Olympia on the 16-20 September. The show will feature state-of-the-art, innovative products, which are, it sez 'ere, set to revolutionise the electronics industry.

Live '93 will give you the opportunity for hands-on experience, letting you touch and play with the latest electronic wizardry. Also featured will be live television broadcasts, lectures, demonstrations and a host of celebrities from TV and radio. For all games fans there will be a huge games gallery, with the latest computer and VR games.



Companies exhibiting at the show will include Sky Television, Roland, Sharp, Yamaha and Fox Video. A taster of the things that you'll be able to see are: telephones that are the size of a credit card, virtually invisible speakers from Bose, a voice-recognition computer and a TV that can be attached to glasses, enabling you to walk while still watching Virtual Vision. One thing's for sure, the show's set to be a large affair, and you can be sure we'll be in the thick of it.



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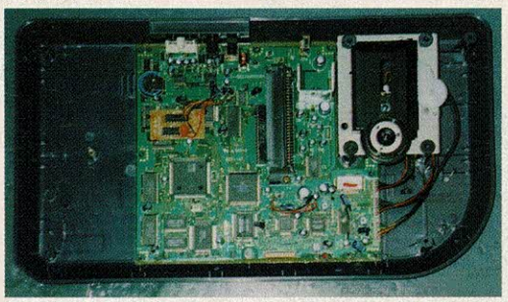
second time lucky

It's been two years since Sega launched their last significant piece of hardware – the Mega-CD – and now this month, they've released two in tandem. The Mega Drive 2 and Mega-CD 2 have just arrived from Japan, so Dominic Handy swiftly takes a screwdriver to them.

Let's get one thing straight. If you've just bought a Mega Drive or Mega-CD, don't start pulling your hair out just yet: Sega haven't just made your machine redundant, in fact, they've probably made it more sought after. You see, whenever an electronics company redesigns a piece of hardware – as Sega have done here – they do it for two simple reasons. Primarily, it's to update the design and make it more in keeping with their image. Secondly, it gives them a second bite of the cherry when it comes to designing the innards of the machine.

Well, here's what you get for your £70 in Japan. The packaging is much more lively than the boring European system. The Mega Drive 2 comes complete with a power supply, composite video and audio lead, and tiny six-button joypad.



The outside of the new CD unit is great, but when you open it up you get a real disappointment. The circuit board has a bodge to correct a mistake on it (notice the little brown board on the left). The CD mechanism is also a lot smaller and cheaper.

A Mega-CD 2 unit for under £200 in Japan is a more realistic price from Sega. To make the unit compatible with both the small, new machine and the old Mega Drive, you plug in that long bit of black plastic on the left for the larger machine.

MEGA DRIVE 2

Yes, the original Mega Drive was (still is!) perfectly suitable to have on top of your video or TV, but compared to the SNES (which, admittedly, came out a year later), the Mega Drive does look a bit techy and old-fashioned. The Mega Drive 2 is a much slicker affair. First off, it's about five centimetres narrower than the original. It's also a lot lighter. The reductions in size and weight, however, have come at the cost of the headphones and TV socket – they've both bitten the dust. It's ironic that Sega have gone for a Scart-only machine, particularly because they dumped the Scart socket when they redesigned the Master System. It's unlikely that a TV socket will be added to the UK machine – which is rumoured to arrive in September – because of the space, but it would be technically possible to add a TV modulator to the Scart socket (like Commodore did with the Amiga 500).

The two remaining sockets at the back – the Scart and power sockets – are both smaller than originally, meaning you won't be able to use any of the existing leads with the Mega Drive 2.

Opening up the machine, everything's a lot simpler than the original, with the unit dominated by Sega's custom LSI chip. Sega have used the increases in chip development over the past few years to reduce the size and production cost of the internals. Surprisingly, the unit is still designed to be easily converted to different territories.

The most interesting thing about the new machine is that it comes with the sexy six-button joypad. It feels a bit small and weird to start with, but it soon becomes more comfortable than the original. In operation, the MD2 acts no different from the original, so existing owners have no reason to upgrade.

MEGA-CD 2

The Mega-CD 2 retails for around £200 in Japan, and from the outside it still looks a great machine. The Mega Drive 2 can be slotted on the side easily, but to use the original MD, you need to bolt on a piece of plastic (which is included). Having the CD alongside the Mega Drive means the CD is now top-loading. This, at last, allows you to eject a CD whenever you want just by pressing the eject button. If you eject the CD during a game, the machine will just hang there waiting for the CD to be replaced. Small changes have been made to the menu screens, replacing "Eject" with "Change" as *you* are effectively doing the ejecting now.

The machine has dropped about £20 in price, and opening up the Mega-CD 2 it's easy to see where the money has been saved. First off there's only one light, which shows when the CD's being accessed. It's a shame there's not a power light, but it's no great loss. Looking at the innards, you can immediately see a much smaller, cheaper CD mechanism. The board is also more condensed, packed with chips from a wide variety of manufacturers like Sanyo, Sharp, NEC and Sega. The unit we have (which was one of the first off the shelves) has a massive collection of wires stuck to one of the Sega chips. They obviously cocked it up in production and bodged the first units out. Each of these wires has to be soldered to a specific leg on a LSI chip, which is very time-intensive. When Sega fix the problem on the chip, they will be able to produce a very cheap and simple Mega-CD. The realistic price of the CD unit should be around £150, and this should help them reach their goal.

Which one to get? Well, I'd plump for the Mega-CD 2 every time.

Probe software have come a long way since Fergus McGovern and Vakis Paraskuda set it up in Fergus' bedroom eight years ago; from the Amstrad CPC and their first big hit, *Devil's Crown*, to top titles such as *The Terminator 1* and *2*, and *Alien*^{3} across the Sega formats. Now, with Fergus running the show, Probe have become Europe's largest game developers, producing more games for the big two publishers – Sega and Nintendo – than anyone else. And with Probe handling the development of *Mortal Kombat* on all the Sega decks, including the Mega-CD, the future just gets brighter and brighter for the Croydon-based developers.

The chartered surveyor turned games guru entered the business thanks to P&P Micro Distribution, a massive Europe-wide computer dealership. But when Fergus joined P&P, they were still called Pete and Pam, and lived next door.

"I basically started off as a real dogsbody junior there – I was their second-ever employee! They gave me a computer and I started playing with it..."

With Vakis handling the programming and Fergus the marketing, Probe was born and wrote and published two games on the Amstrad CPC, Commodore C16 and Speccy.

"They did okay, and we made money out of them, but it obviously wasn't the business we're in now. Then US Gold approached us and asked us to develop a game for them, which was Xevious, and that's how we got into it."

> **"Violence is worrying, and I think that Sega and Nintendo should be as careful as possible."**

Given that the last 12 months have been a real boom time for consoles, how have Probe done?

"We've just doubled; in our turnover and in our staff requirements. We've now got 80 employees, with 39 of them on site right now, with more when we move into bigger premises. We've cut down on the number of products we've been doing, and we've had some really big sellers. *Alien*^{3} has done exceptionally well across all the formats (and won the award for Best SNES Game at the recent CES show), *Terminator 2* has done really well, *Lemmings* on the Master System and Game Gear is still up there in the charts... We've moved across onto other systems and formats in quite a strong way and we've got some really good titles coming out this Christmas.

"There's *Mortal Kombat*, obviously, on Mega-CD, Mega Drive, Master System, Game Gear and even Game Boy. We've got an original game called *Jelly Boy* which we held back and we *were* doing on the SNES. That's just been bought by Electronic Arts and they're going to be putting it out on the MD as well, and that's really cool. Plus, of course, a whole host of original games that we're doing for Sega Japan, so I'm quite pleased with the quality of stuff we're doing at the moment."

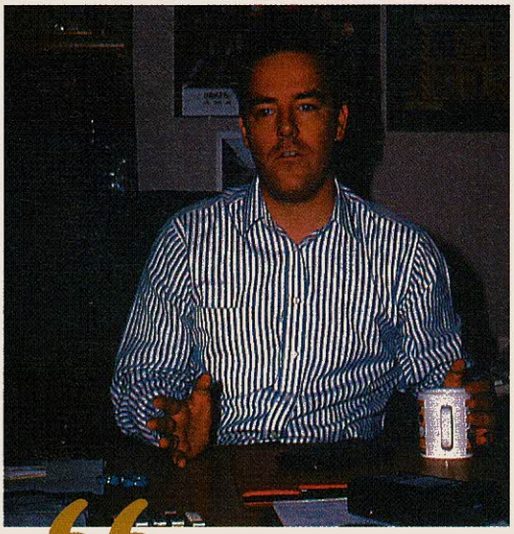
Last year you hinted at possible CD development, but that you didn't just want to end up shoving out games with big cartoon intros and minimal gameplay, like *Cobra Command*. How can you improve on things like that?

"I just have this real problem that it's great having a CD-ROM there, but where's the game? Why isn't the game any different [to cart]? Okay, so you've got more memory to put stuff down on, but where's the fun element in it? And even when the new systems come out, what makes the game? Why not just turn on the TV and watch the pictures?

"Okay, so you've got lovely pictures stuck onscreen, but what's the point? It's not a game, and the consumers would find that out. So I think that the whole of the games industry just needs to change its concept of what a CD game actually is. You can do just as much on a cart as you can on CD, it's just that the cart is more expensive because of the size of the ROM you need. Also, there are hardware limitations across the formats, and they don't allow you to be that spectacular. You'll get to the point when the programmers will get around that with all these techniques and they'll find special ways of doing things. But I think that Probe really needs to think about how we'll attack any project. I don't just want to convert stuff across."

So what will be Probe's first step into the CD market?

"Well, one of the first ones will be *Mortal Kombat*. The MD version, I personally feel, is a league above other fighting games anyway, because of the way we've managed to incorporate the digitised graphics from the arcade machine. So that makes it different to any other MD game. The way that the Mega-CD version will differ is that we're going to increase the frame rates, include more animation to make it really smooth... The music will be arcade quality and it may even have some special moves that aren't in the other versions, but at the end of the day, it will be a replica of the arcade machine... It'll be finished by us at the end of December, so it'll probably be out in the early part of next year.



> **"I think the whole industry just needs to change its concept of what a CD actually is."**

"On the other stuff we're doing, we're taking a really different approach. People are always talking about 'interactive games', but what's a video game if it isn't interactive! So we're sitting back at the moment – not being lazy, because we're doing four CD games – but we're really thinking about how you can make those into real games."

How do you feel about the accusations in the Press about violence in video games?

"I'm hardly anyone to talk, with *Mortal Kombat* coming out! I think that the national tabloids pick on something every year or two years. One year it's video, one year it's TV and then it's Elvis Presley swinging his hips and only filming him from the waist up. The thing that is worrying about video

games is that it's a very contained environment for a kid, so they're concentrating 100%. But I don't think that anything currently in a video game is any more violent than what you can see on TV or on the streets.

"We have taken precautions, though. For example, in *Mortal Kombat* you have to have a special code, which I think Acclaim are going to do by parental consent, in order to play the violent mode. The parents write in for it, you know. But kids will find that out: I guarantee they'll find ways around it. So yes, violence is worrying, and I think that Sega and Nintendo should be as careful as possible."

Your 1992 schedule mentioned something about the Nintendo Super FX chip, have you fiddled with that one yet?

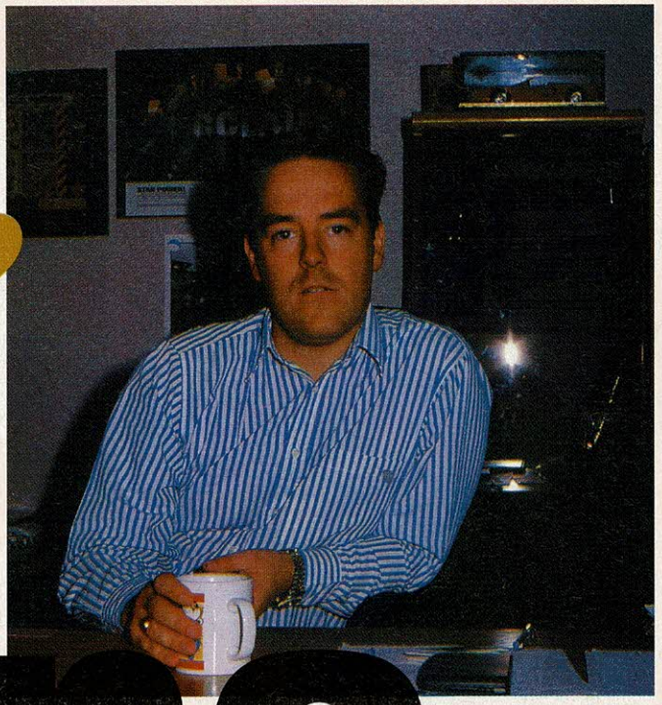
"No comment!"

Er, okay, how about Sega's own DSP chip?

"What DSP chip?! Again, no comment!"

Okie-dokie. With Sega VR launching in the US at the end of the year, would you be interested in working with it?

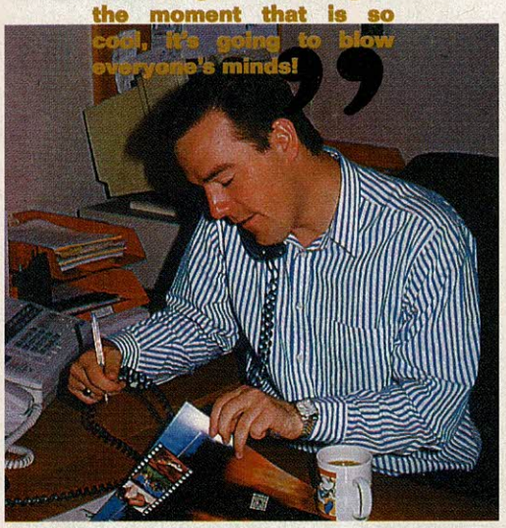
"Yes and no. Very interested in doing it, but we're not really a 3-D technology company. So yes, I'd love it as an R&D [research and development] project to play around with and see what we came up with, but as far as definitely doing something, that's not for me to say. We're very close to Sega Japan [Fergus had been out there the previous week], so I think that if we wanted to do something, we probably could, but it's not something I'm actively pursuing at the moment."



> "I don't think anything currently in a video game is any more violent than what you see on the TV."

Probe

> "We've got something at the moment that is so cool, it's going to blow everyone's minds!"



With the forthcoming release of Mortal Kombat, its programmers, Probe Software, have shot to the forefront of Sega development. They now produce more console games than anyone else in Europe, which puts their boss, Fergus McGovern, in the ideal position to get a grilling from MEGA POWER's David Graham...

It doesn't have anything to do with your well-known dislike of 3-D games, then?
"I *didn't* like 3-D games, but I do now! And what I do like, and what is really cool, is Sega's *Virtua Racing*. That is 3-D as far as I'm concerned; that fast, uprated polygon effect is excellent. And the 3-D we're doing in Silicon Graphics environments... there are a few things that we're working on at the moment which show 3-D in a different light, but I can't really talk about them."

Damn!
"We've got something at the moment that is so cool, it's going to blow everyone's minds!"

For Sega?
"For CD."

Better than *Silpheed*?
"State of the art."

Fergus then turned off my tape recorder, and explained, off the record, just what we've got to look forward to. The words smacking and gob immediately sprang to mind.
How long does it take you to write a game?
"At the moment we're quoting eight to 12 months to write a Mega Drive game. We decided to increase our development time not because we need it to physically write the game, but so that we can get the playability right. European developers have a reputation for technical brilliance, stunning graphics, music of the highest quality but gameplay that lacks in depth, and we're trying to get that right."

Have you been approached to anything on the 3DO (the new multimedia console venture involving Electronic Arts)?
"We're not actively involved at the moment, and the reason is we've just too many toys to play with! Until we know them like the backs of our hands, we can't apply any extra resources to do anything on the 3DO, but that will probably be old news by the time this comes out."

How do you feel about accusations of a lack of originality in video games?
"I suppose we could be accused of that, couldn't we?! I do worry about it, because I think it would be pretty sad if we didn't. If Probe as a company turned round and said, 'No, no, everything's great, everything's original,' then we should probably throw our consoles away! A developer who says that should be shot! I'm not worried about the market going, I think the market's there; I'm worried because I want to keep making sure our games are the best, or that there's something extra in them. And I know that what we're doing on CD and what we're going to do on CD is not being done by other people.

"On consoles at the moment there are limitations... but as long as Sega and Nintendo come up with new chips, then they'll keep those consoles alive, and every time you bring out a new DSP chip or whatever, you'll get different styles of game."

So after *Mortal Kombat*, what comes next?
"We're doing *Daffy Duck*, which is a Loony Tunes licence, for Sega Japan. We've got *The Incredible Hulk* and some hot licences – these are all to be completed by us for Christmas, and launched in the early part of next year. We've also got an original game for the Menacer light gun, so all those light gun owners will have another cool game soon. We've got *Jelly Boy* from EA, too. Those are the immediate ones. Into next year, we've probably got the hottest three licences of the year, signed up already; they're really excellent. I reckon they're the top three films for next year."

In the meantime, Probe are already working on a massive 53 games, and all these bar two (one for the Amiga and one for PC) are destined to hit a console near you soon. And going by what we saw down at Probe, the future of games is very secure...

chucky's BA

The likes of Chuck Rock, Jaguar XJ220, Wonder Dog and Corporation haven't gone unnoticed by Sega owners, but what may have passed them by is their development team, Core Design. Already a household name on the Amiga, Core are, with the launch of their own Sega label, trying to establish an identity for themselves on the Mega Drive. Mean Power takes a look at Sega's latest third-party licensee.

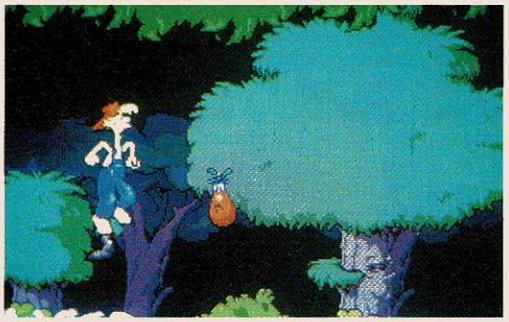
BUBBA 'N' STIX

Core are hoping to have this highly original animated adventure out on both Mega Drive and Mega-CD by early 1994. Billy Allison and Simon Phipps, the animators, have spent months perfecting the 200+ frames of animation. Each one has to be hand-crafted, but they hope all the effort will be worth it.

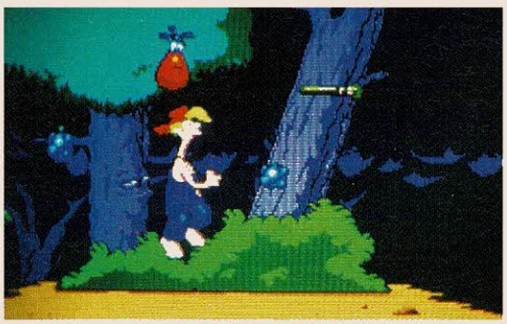
Also appearing on computer, this humorous game follows in the same mould as *Global Gladiators*, combining smooth, vivid graphics with puzzling gameplay. You play Bubba, a mild-mannered delivery boy, who is one day kidnapped by an alien spaceship. It transpires that the owner of this craft, the strangely-named Waldo, is on a mission to collect an example of every species in the galaxy. As his choice for the human specimen, you're not too happy, and on landing at his planet you vow to escape as soon as *humanly* possible. But there is a little alien helper on hand, in the form of Stix, a crazy stick-like creature. He has also managed to escape from the spacecraft, and now both of you are on the run from Waldo. If the evil one catches up with you both, you'll be placed in an alien zoo as exhibits.

Stix may look thin and scrawny, but the little chap has strange and magical powers. It is the comic interaction between these two oddball characters that should make *Bubba 'n' Stix* a joy to play. The stick can be thrown like a boomerang, stabbed, used to reach upwards, or be used to swing both overhead and like a baseball bat. If you leave Stix alone for too long, he'll develop his own personality and start performing for his own amusement. Core hope to give the player the maximum amount of moves possible whilst retaining the playability. "If the control is not 'pick up and play', we will have failed in our design," they say.

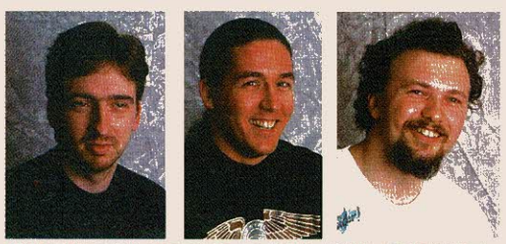
You'll be able to find out if they've succeed next year...



This is the boy himself. Here you see Bubba in full flow, flying through the air with the greatest of ease. No wonder he's flying he doesn't want to wind up as one of Waldo's exhibits.



Bubba launches Stix into flight. It's hard to convey the smoothness of the animation from this one picture, but with 200 plus frames for the main characters, it can't fail to be one of the most visually impressive games around.



Mark Watson, left, programmer on *Bubba 'n' Stix*, was helped on the animation side by smilin' Simon Phipps, centre, and bubbly Billy Allison.

As the first versions of *Corporation* on computer started to top the charts, software companies started to take notice. The developers, Core Design, were obviously a company with something new. This was their first computer product under their own label – a make or break time for any company. Unlike some other highly-reviewed-but-poorly-sold games, here was a highly innovative product that also had thousands of punters hooked.

Soon after, Virgin tied up the rights to publish the Mega Drive version, and subsequently sold loads. Core had hit the Sega scene and were happy with what they saw. Here was a whole new market, with new technology and an unhealthy appetite for games, especially innovative ones. But Core weren't a company to rush into anything, so they took the next few steps slowly.

Martin Iveson spends his days locked in an underground dungeon. From here he pounds out sparkling tunes that you will undoubtedly hear on a Core game near you soon. He's occasionally thrown some food, depending on the tune.

First off, they wanted to ensure *Corporation* wasn't a one-hit wonder. With the Virgin deal in the bag, they unleashed *Chuck Rock* on all formats. Yet again, it sold tons. Then Core went quiet for a while, planning their next move. With the announcement of an exclusive deal with JVC and their Wonder Mega machine to produce *Wonder Dog*, a flagship iconic piece of software, Core shocked everyone. A surprising move, especially as the CD-based machine was only available in Japan, but a prestigious one that has not only earned them the respect of other developers, but also a pile of cash. The experience and money they gained from developing *Wonder Dog* was soon put to good use on their next two Sega projects, both for Mega-CD, *Jaguar XJ220* and *Wolfchild* (along with a CD version of Chucky).

But all their titles had, until now, been marketed and sold by another company, be it Virgin, JVC or Sega. Then in March of this year, they announced that Sega Europe had granted them a third-party licence to produce games under their own name. Core were now on their own...

ACK

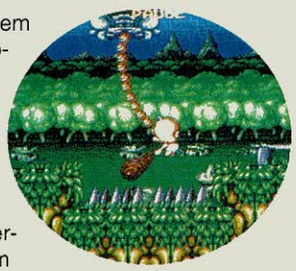
It seems as if Core Design can do no wrong – the boss's Porsche never even gets a parking ticket. Core's impressive Georgian headquarters were initially only half occupied by the development team. Their recent success, though, has meant a forced expansion into the rest of the building, and with the Sega side only just taking off, they will undoubtedly need even more space before the year is out. Core currently employ a massive development team, and are always on the look-out for talent.

CHUCK ROCK 2
SON OF CHUCK

Following the success of the previous game, Chuck and his rapidly expanding family will return to both Mega Drive and CD screens next month. Ever since he humiliated the slimy Gary Gritter in his first escapade, good fortune has rained upon lucky Chucky. After inventing the first primitive car, called the Rock-et, Chuck has received financial backing from the bank and expanded his empire with two massive car firms. However, on the way up the ladder, he has made more enemies.

Baby Chuck faces a mighty task against this huge and very angry dinosaur. Luckily for Chuck Jnr, he's super tough and is renowned for the super whack. This involves having some milk and hitting the dinosaur very hard on the head.

Primary amongst them is Brick Jagger, a rubber-lipped rival and owner of Datstone Car Company. Brick has been hassling to buy Chuck's successful plant recently, and now, in a desperate attempt to get him to sign, Jagger has kidnapped Chuck. Brick is threatening to turn him into rubble unless Mrs Rock will sign it over to Datstone.



Chuck Jnr cleverly swings to avoid spiking his nappy. This would not only cause a dreadful mess, but would also make the surrounding countryside disintegrate – nasty!

Chuck's wife, Ophelia, is distraught, but listening from his wooden playpen, Chuck Junior sees his crying mother and jumps into action. Bursting through the bars, the young nipper vows: "Goo, goo. Gaa, gaa. I'll be back!"

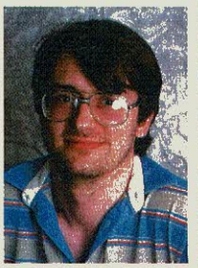
The game takes a familiar format, with Chuck Junior venturing over six parallax scrolling stages in search of his father. Like the original, along the way, Junior will find friendly dinosaurs on which he can ride – in fact the whole thing takes much inspiration from the original.

Street date: August 1993

THUNDERHAWK AH-73M

This is Core Design's big hope for 1993. "This product will break new ground in Mega-CD technology and set new standards and definitives for software development on Sega's new CD platform," boast Core. Yeah, well, if it does half it says it should, *Thunderhawk* should be one helluva game.

Locked onto your target, you get ready with those missiles to blast those guys out of the water. This is Thunderhawk in action, and as you can see there's plenty going on.



Mark Avory after yet another day slaving over Core's forthcoming Thunderhawk.

Thunderhawk is the first game from Core designed specifically to use the Mega-CD's special capabilities, especially the hardware scaling. "We will be able to create realistic-looking terrain with rotation and banking texture-mapped ground (just like the SNES Mode 7, but with banking!)." The scaling techniques are also extended to the enemy vehicles, aircraft, trees, rocks and other objects that appear on the landscape. From all accounts, visually this is going to be a very innovative game. It even includes a 3-D fractal-generated intro sequence detailing the abilities of the chopper, and highlighting the helmet-mounted control system.

Like that other great helicopter game, *Jungle Strike*, *Thunderhawk* gives you a series of missions to complete. As you advance through the game, and complete the missions, you pick up numerous medals and campaign ribbons. However, if you don't cut the mustard and fail to complete your primary objective, but still manage to escape from the warzone with your chopper intact, you'll still go through a debriefing but fail to win the glory and adulation bestowed upon war heroes. Instead you receive one demerit, the third of which will result in you losing your wings.

At the completion of each mission, you are given the chance to save your position. Considering the size of this game – ten missions, each with between five and ten objectives – this is one extra option you'll be grateful for.

In common with the only other CD chopper game, *Cobra Command* (*Thunderstorm FX*), the game includes a variety of death sequences. One moment you could find your helicopter ploughing into the dirt nose first, while another might see your aircraft's armour being ripped apart by enemy bullets. You've only got one chopper at your disposal, so you'll have to be careful.

Street date: September 1993

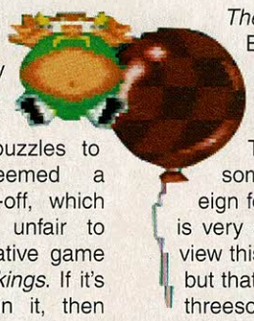
By opening doors in Crutonia, the Vikings are shot back in time to various lands and periods. Here they have landed, literally, in Egypt. Olaf the Stout uses his sheild to float down the stairs and squash the walking mummies below.

Here you can see *The Lost Vikings*' teamwork in action. Olaf the Stout blocks the flames coming in their direction while Balerog the Beserker draws an arrow and prepares to let rip. Don't worry about Olaf, the arrow will go straight through him.

another LO

Virgin are not ones to chase after lost causes, but when they clapped their peepers on Interplay's Super Nintendo game The Lost Vikings, they knew that it was just the thing the Mega Drive was ripe for. With the Sega version sketchily pencilled in for a Christmas release, Dominic Handy looks forward to the game SNES players were calling "the finest piece of aggressive interaction ever".

Let's face it, if you were going to find a lost cause anywhere, it would be on the Nintendo. But this is one lost cause worth pursuing. When Interplay released the Super Nintendo version of *The Lost Vikings* in April of this year, they shocked the whole SNES world with a game compared to the likes of *Lemmings* and *Mario*. But to be fair, it would be difficult to compare *The Lost Vikings* to anything. Nowadays, any game with more than one character onscreen and puzzles to solve is deemed a *Lemmings* rip-off, which is completely unfair to such an innovative game as *The Lost Vikings*. If it's got platforms in it, then *Mario* or *Mickey Mouse* start to flow from writers' pens, which again would be an injustice to *Vikings*. It's true that some of the basic premises of Interplay's interactive romp are seen in other games, but the strange concoction created by mixing them all together is unparalleled.



In a nutshell, *The Lost Vikings* are Olaf, Balerog and Erik. While roaming the hills, bludgeoning defenceless sheep one day, they were sucked up by an alien spaceship. The craft's owner, The Mighty Tomator, wants the trio as an exhibit in some strange and twisted collection of foreign folk he possesses. In fact, the storyline is very similar to another game we also preview this month, Core Design's *Bubba 'n' Stix*, but that is where the similarities end. Now the threesome have to escape from their puzzling surroundings and return to their homeland.

But the Vikings spent their whole lives rampaging around Europe and trampling smaller nations (like ourselves), so surely some alien bod in a flying tin can doesn't present much of an obstacle for these brutal warriors? True enough, but it's not old Tomator who gives them initial grief, it's their unfamiliar surroundings. The most complex thing these guys had ever come across till now was a sling, and now they're presented with amazing technological developments like magnetism. (Goodness only knows what would have happened if they encountered a cash machine!)

But these butch warriors aren't scared to fiddle about with what's around them, and pretty soon they bust something. Well, not just something,

but an interspacial time matter transferral beam device thingy. Yes, you've guessed, the stranded Vikings now not only find themselves lost in Tomator's planet of Crutonia, but also in time!

The key to their escape lies in understanding the Vikings' various abilities. For instance, if there's fighting to be done, Balerog is the man to call for. Whereas a heavy onslaught of people or machinery can be plugged by Olaf's huge bulk. On the other hand, you might need to prance around the level with unerring athleticism, in which case the slim speedy figure of Erik is needed. As each time zone presents many wide-ranging problems, the Vikings must cooperate to clear all areas of the level. Teamwork is essential to their successful escape, which ensures the gameplay is constantly changing between strategic puzzle-solving and aggressive arcade sections. There are literally hundreds of puzzles awaiting the brotherly band, and while these may become very frustrating, the game is designed so that the arcade elements allow you to relieve much of the tension.

While waddling through the distinctly different worlds – which include such delights as Egypt, Prehistoria, Wacky and The Great Factory – the Vikings occasionally talk to each other via speech bubbles. Their constant ranting adds much humour to the already side-splitting character animation and background detail.

But the fun doesn't stop there. Music and sound effects are treated as an integral part of *The Lost Vikings*. The main title tune starts off sounding like a traditional, tacky Scandinavian folk song and then suddenly breaks into a heavy synth track. Each level also has music themed to the time zone. For instance, while wandering around the sand-covered surroundings of Egypt you'll find yourself starting to feel all Arabic as mysterious tunes start to emanate from the Mega Drive.

Due to its immense variety in the look and feel of the 35+ levels, *The Lost Vikings* is designed to keep your complete attention at all times. Take your hands off the controls for just a few seconds and the Vikings will start acting up – Olaf may even start to pick his nose, the uncouth barbarian! You just won't be able to leave this game – the three Vikings won't allow you to!

Virgin signed on the dotted line for the Mega Drive version of *The Lost Vikings* in June, so work has only just begun on the Sega version. The SNES version was visually spectacular, and Virgin say they will definitely retain the detailed and vibrant cartoon graphics of the Nintendo version, albeit with less colours. While the SNES does have its 256 display colours, the Mega Drive also has a few graphical tricks up its sleeve. *The Lost Vikings* has created a cult following on the SNES, so we'll be keeping a close eye on its Mega Drive development.

Street date: winter 1993

WHO'S WHO?

BALEROG THE BERSERKER

His name might make him out to be a bit off his rocker, but of all the team members, Balerog's the only guy with any weapons – so who's the berserk one now, eh? In one hand he carries a large broadsword – with which he can circumcise a gnat at 50 yards – and in the other a trusty bow and arrow set which his gran gave him for Christmas. He may have been embarrassed at the time, but it certainly comes in more useful than another pair of socks. If butts need kicking, Balerog certainly has the biggest boots.

ERIK THE SWIFT

The notorious Viking beer festivals have failed to bestow upon Erik the beer gut that the others have developed. This makes his slim, athletic figure just the job for sprinting through vast areas, just to suss out the territory. Erik's also quite dull (which isn't helped by hanging around with Olaf and Balerog), and doesn't mind using his lightning-quick speed to smash head-first through walls. Finally, Erik can save you a lot of time on platform-intensive stages as he's the only one who can jump, thus saving a search for a ladder.

OLAF THE STOUT

This guy is without doubt the podgiest member of the team, so don't expect to see him running around doing somersaults. However, weight has its privileges, like immense strength. This not-so-little wanderer can raise his shield and stop heavy enemy attacks. If he lifts the shield above his head, he can also prevent things like hydraulic pumps crushing him and his fellow Vikings. So, like all fat people, he may not be great to look at, but with a name like Olaf he's bound to be ace fun at parties.

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the review

Mega Drive or Mega-CD. Look here first to see if it's on your machine.

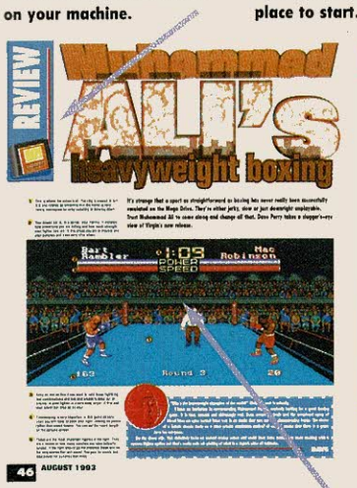
A bit of background to familiarise yourself with what sort of game we're reviewing. You're bound to find something here that you didn't already know, so this is the best place to start.

Out of ten, here's the rating we gave it.

Where applicable, we tell you a bit more about games similar to the one we're reviewing.

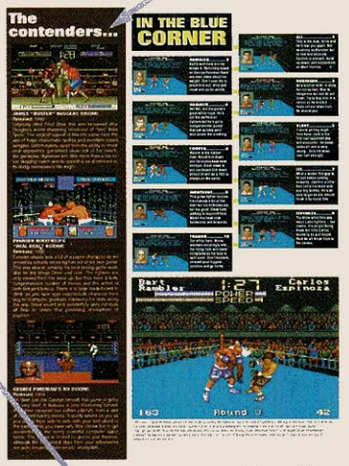
We get deep in the pixels of a game and try to convey the action by showing close-ups from the game. Here you could see anything from a series of slamdunks to the demise of General Ortega.

If all you want to know is what we think about the game, this is where you should start. Each of us has our own gaming likes and dislikes, and it's here we can let rip. Our strict reviewing policy means every one of us must justify our opinion to the others.



One picture in each review will have numbers scattered over it. Using these, we can go even more in-depth explaining elements of the game. Each number corresponds to a numbered caption near the picture.

Instead of blathering on for thousands of words explaining every single element in the game, we give you pictures instead. After all, a picture tells a thousand words, and with the amount of pictures we use, you'll be getting the equivalent of a magazine's worth of text for every review. Beneath each picture, we tell you exactly what's going on and what we think about it.



No, we won't be pulling some strange facial expression in the hope that you can work it out (that's so Eighties...). Each picture fulfils two purposes: it tells you who's written the comment, and what they thought of the game. Red (hot!) means "I think the game's great". Green (neutral) says "it was fun, but I wouldn't buy it". Finally, the blue (cold) face says "I wouldn't even recommend this to that annoying kid in MacDonald's". Any game with a blue face on it should be approached with trepidation.

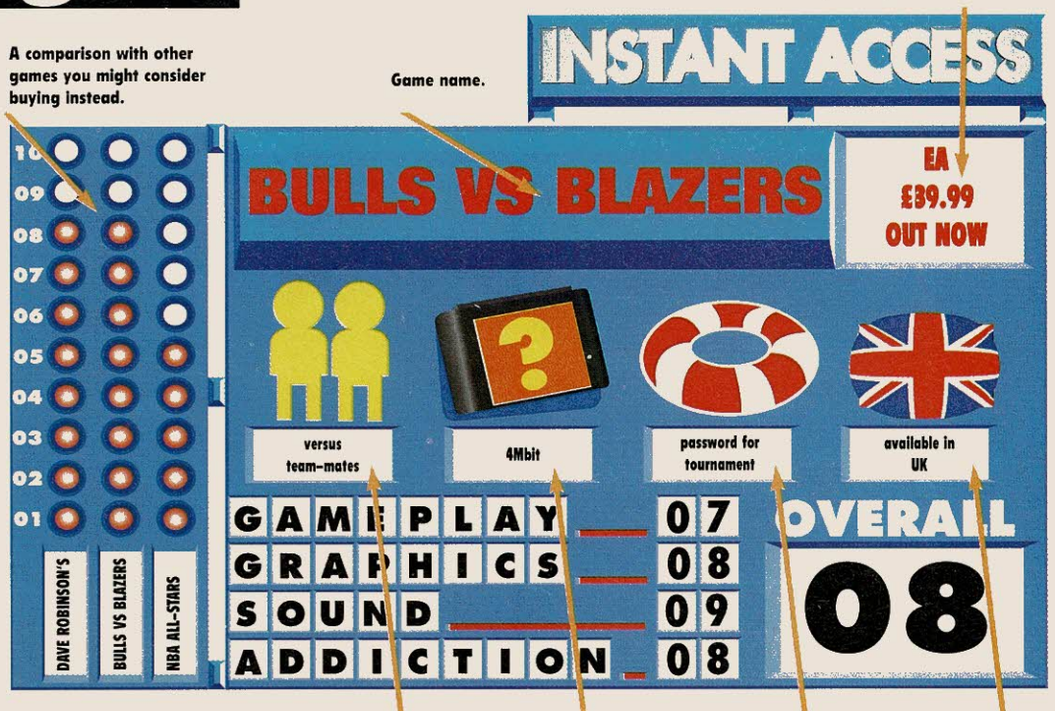
Here we give you the hard facts. Read this and the personal comments to get a quick view of the game.

the ratings

Who it's from, how much it is, and when it's coming out.

A comparison with other games you might consider buying instead.

Game name.



How many players can partake in the action.

How big the cart is (not applicable to CD games).

If there's a save option, how it works and what it saves.

Where in the world it's available.

GAMEPLAY
Takes into account how the game feels. Is it fun to play? Was it difficult to get into? How original is the design?

GRAPHICS
Looks at animation, use of colour, definition, variety and functionality. Ultimately, does it look as good as it should do?

SOUND
Are the tunes and sound effects any good, and, secondly, do they suit the game and build a convincing atmosphere?

ADDICTION
Most games are fun initially, but how long will you be playing it? Is it the sort of game you'd play months after buying it?

OVERALL

- 0-3 – Don't bother. Serious damage to street-cred.
- 4-5 – A very risky purchase. Don't blame us if you get a dog.
- 6-8 – A decent game, but may only be suited to certain players.
- 9-10 – Everyone will love this. We'd lash out the cash for it.

REVIEW

technoC

this is probably the first shoot-'em-up designed with roleplaying fans in mind

I'm not the world's greatest RPG fan, mainly because they involve so much tedious searching for obscure items. So, as you can imagine, the thought of tackling TechnoClash was not a pleasant one. I should have known better though, for EA have yet again turned a genre on its head.

The concept behind TechnoClash is intriguing. Pitting the old ways against the new always provides an enthralling battle. Occasionally, you may think, "How the hell do I, with this measly spell, stand a chance against a massive rocket launcher?". But the thing is, you do, because you've got your cunning and wits. Because of this, TechnoClash is very hard to get into, but as soon as you depart the first level, you'll find yourself starting to empathise with the plight of Ronaan and his people.

While the whole game gels impressively together, there is one element of it that stands out: the spell selector. Previous RPG games have always been interrupted by the constant flicking between screens, choosing your spell. Here, though, you just press c, move the joypad in any direction, then let go of c. Choosing spells is dead easy, which ensures you never get disenchanted with fighting.

Admittedly, most of the time can be spent blasting things, but if you want to get anywhere in this game, you'll have to sit down, read the instructions and think about your actions. If you're prepared to do that, you won't be disappointed.

DOM

RPG players have always been split between playing the roles of either a spell 'n' sword wielder (as in *Dungeons & Dragons*) or a gun-toting space traveller (like *Buck Rogers*). With *TechnoClash*, Electronic Arts have ingeniously placed the two cultures together for a clash of the titans.

Being the old-fashioned types, EA don't allow you to play the techno-freaks, with their massive weapons and infinite technology, no, you have to play the poor old trainee wizard who's only got a bag of spells to protect him. Okay, that's not strictly true, he's also got a ton of mind powers and a band of loyal compatriots who will do their utmost to save the Inner Realm from the onslaught of the Engine Men.

The reason the Engine Men cropped up in the Inner Realm to start with is unclear at the beginning of your quest, but hopefully as your adventure progresses it will shed a bit of light on the situation.

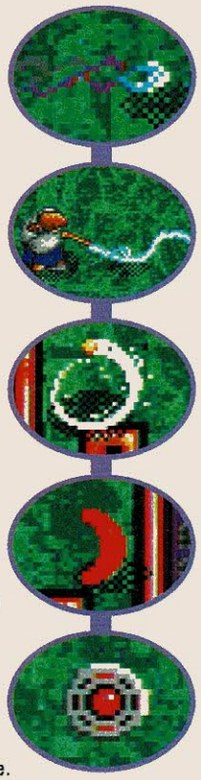
One thing you do know is that your great mentor Abaris' powerful Life Staff has been nicked and dismantled by the Engine Men. While you're in the technological land, it might be worth keeping an eye out for it as you never know what something as lethal as the Life Staff might be used for in the hands of the Engine Men.

Despite Abaris being an extremely clumsy old codger to let the Life Staff get into the hands of the enemy, he is still very useful to your quest. As you progress, he'll advise as to what he thinks you should do. He'll also supply two bodyguards, Farrg and Chazz, who will protect you.

Then there's your loyal falcon, Indar, who even if he isn't much use to you as a spotter can be chucked on the fire to make a very hearty Sunday roast.

SCORCERER'S SPELLBOOK

Press and hold the c button during play and you'll be able to choose from your extensive spellbook...



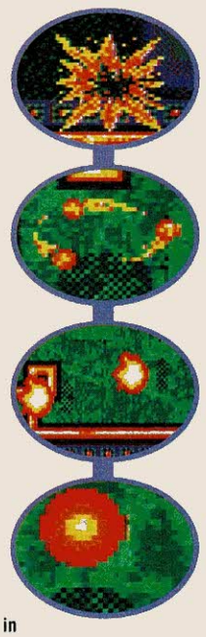
BASIC
The simplest and least effective of the spells, but also the most commonly used because of its inexhaustible supply. All enemies are susceptible to the basic spell, but it can take ages to kill the generals.

LIGHTNING
A good, long range weapon that's ideal for getting annoying little low-level snipers hiding behind pillars. However, use this on generals and they will just laugh at you.

SUPER
The Super Spell is powerful but very rare. Don't waste these on the normal mongs, save them for the generals at the end of each level. Be ultra accurate with them or they'll be wasted.

ANGLE
Should really be called the Boomerang spell (because that's what it looks and acts like), but the Basic spell had already nicked the B on the menu. Slow and cumbersome in operation. Pretty hopeless.

TIME BOMB
Now these are very useful after the second level, when you have to start blowing up things like rocket launcher bays. Just light the blue touchpaper and retire to a safe distance. 3, 2, 1... BOOM!



MONDO MAJOR
If you're being attack from all sides, the Mondo comes is useful. It's basically a smart bomb, so it should be saved up for special occasions. You'll need a few to damage any generals, though.

HOLD
These are great if thrown accurately. They fly across the screen and wrap around enemies, stunning them temporarily. Then either you or your bodyguard can dispose of their helpless bodies.

WIDE
Wide is ideal for enemies in a line in front of you. This shoots three fireballs in a wide trajectory. It's quite inaccurate though, so if a general's moving about don't bother wasting it on him.

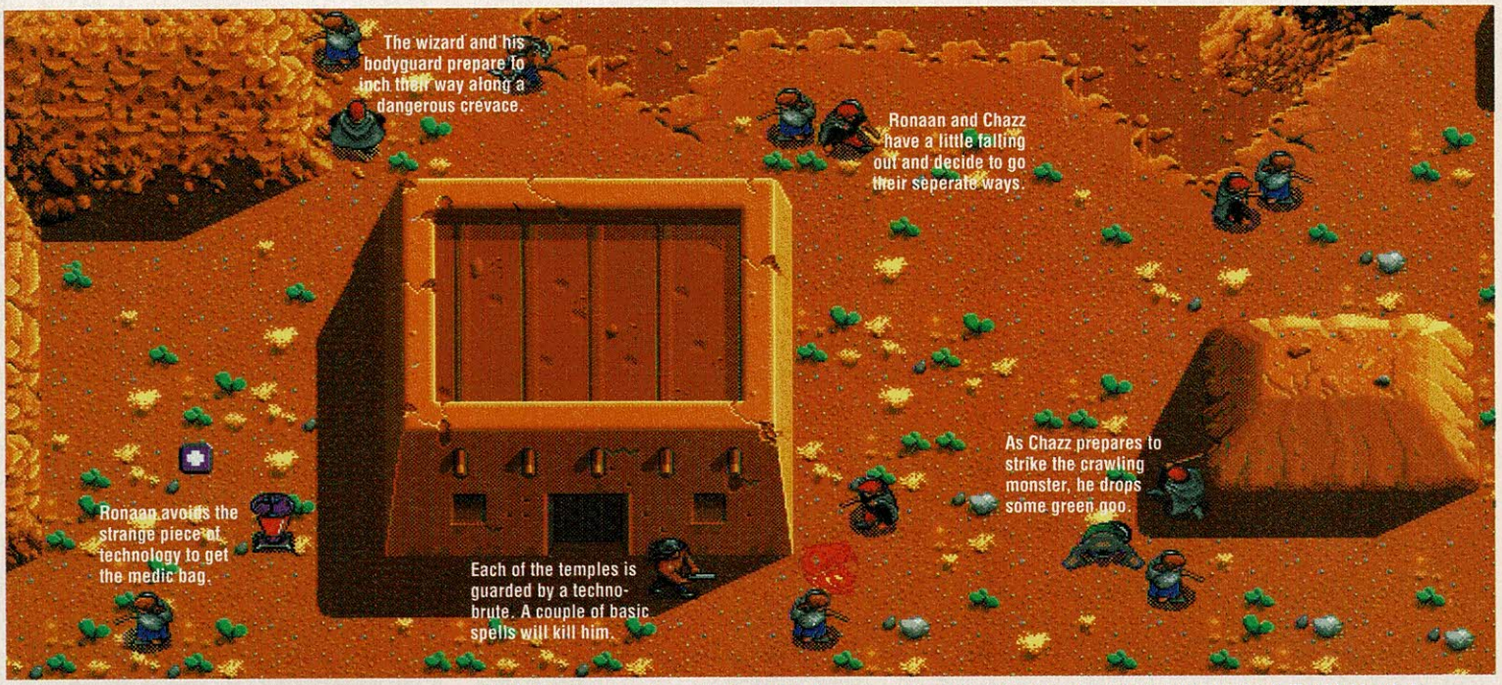
DEATH
Now whatever you do, don't use these on anything but generals. This spell is ultra deadly, but also very rare. If you waste these on the simple guys, you deserve not to get anywhere in the game!

ish

Constantly fixing Apple Macs has put Dominic Handy in good stead for his next mission. He grabs a screwdriver and roll of sticky tape and goes in search of some marauding techno-freaks.

OVERALL

08



Pop inside these temples on the desert level and you will find rocket bays (as shown in the picture below). The third level also contains many strange mutant creatures, like the desert dwellers that drop poisonous green goo; step in it and you will die. Other obstacles include massive cracks in the desert floor. If you stumble and fall down these, you will be killed for good and have to start the whole game again (unless you have noted down the all-important passwords!).

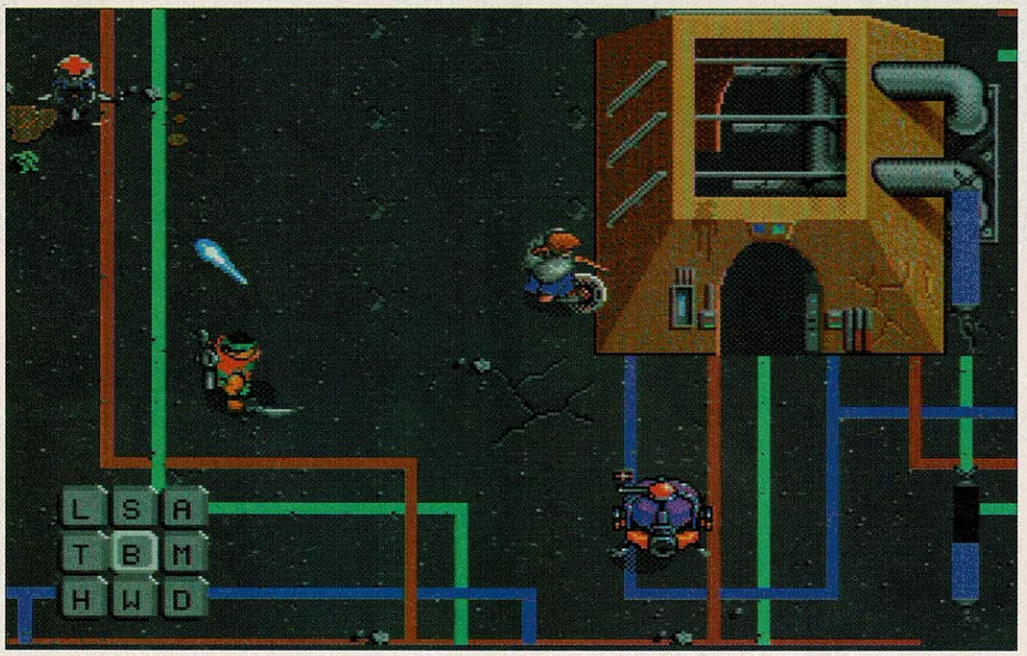
It was all Abaris' fault that you have to go on this adventure in the first place. The Engine Men nicked his Life Staff and now you have to get it back.

From left to right, these are the folks at your disposal: Fargg and Chazz, both bodyguards; Ronaan (with Ingar on his shoulder), the wizard; and Abaris, the wise man.

On the second level, you must retrieve card keys to close the four doors of the junkyard. As each is closed, you get a bit of info about the others' locations.

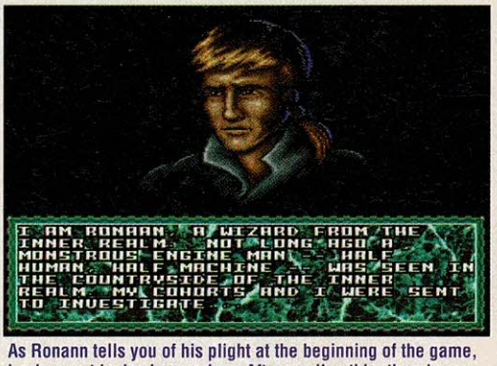
On the third level, the desert, you have to disable the rocket launchers that the Engine men are going to use for the destruction of the universe. Touching the control box in the middle will warn you of this potential disaster and tell you how to prevent it. One of the launch bays is in the top-left of this room, so just walk up to it, drop a time bomb and get outta there!

Here you find yourself on your own on level two. The indicators on the right show that your bodyguard has bitten the dust, and that you (the blue bar) have about half your energy left. If you have any spells left, you can restore your energy by pressing A and B together (or the MODE button on the six-button joypad). As you can see, you are in the junkyard. Around you are the remnants of the technological experiments that the Engine Men have carried out. That strange creature next to you should be frozen with the hold spell (H) and then swiped down with your broadsword.



Prudent use of the spellbook is essential to Ronaan's success. The default selection is the basic spell, B, to which you will always return when you run out of any other spells. To get into the spellbook, simply press and hold the C button, then move the joypad in any of the eight directions to choose your spell, then simply let go of the C button to activate it. The whole process can be done in less than a second, and rids *TechnoClash* of the weapons selection problems of other RPGs.

Your powers are so strong that you can see through your falcon, Indar's eyes. Indar can fly around the whole of the stage and show you where the Engine Men are (blobs in the scanner).



As Ronann tells you of his plight at the beginning of the game, he does not look a happy chap. After reading this, there's no way you can leave him and his mates to destruction.

When you slot in the card keys on level two, the info boxes tell you that some of the larger junkpiles are hollow. One of them has a card key in it, but the others are packed with pick-ups. In the top-left of this pile is a heal spell. In the centre you will find a teleport spell, although you won't need this till later on in the game. Up the top-right is a lightning spell, which always comes in useful.

By combining shoot-'em-ups with RPGs, Electronic Arts have come up with an interesting concept. Now I know that sounds pretty naff, well wait to be surprised, as this is really very good.

I agree with Dom that as you play the first level you think, uh oh, I've seen all this before. Well you haven't because as you progress past the first level, the game starts to open into one hell of an escapade. The sprites aren't indistinguishable, as is often the case on RPGs, and the graphics using delightful colours, give the impression you're watching Saturday morning cartoons. Having a large option for casting spells gives the game variation, as does the added attraction of levitation and teleportation. The sound FX are very realistic, not your usual sound of someone thumping away on a DX7. EA are renowned for their sports sims so it's good to see them dabbling in other territories. With the depth and thought that this game requires, it'll be interesting to see how well it sells. But we at MEGA POWER know our games better than some people know themselves, so check this out, you won't be disappointed.

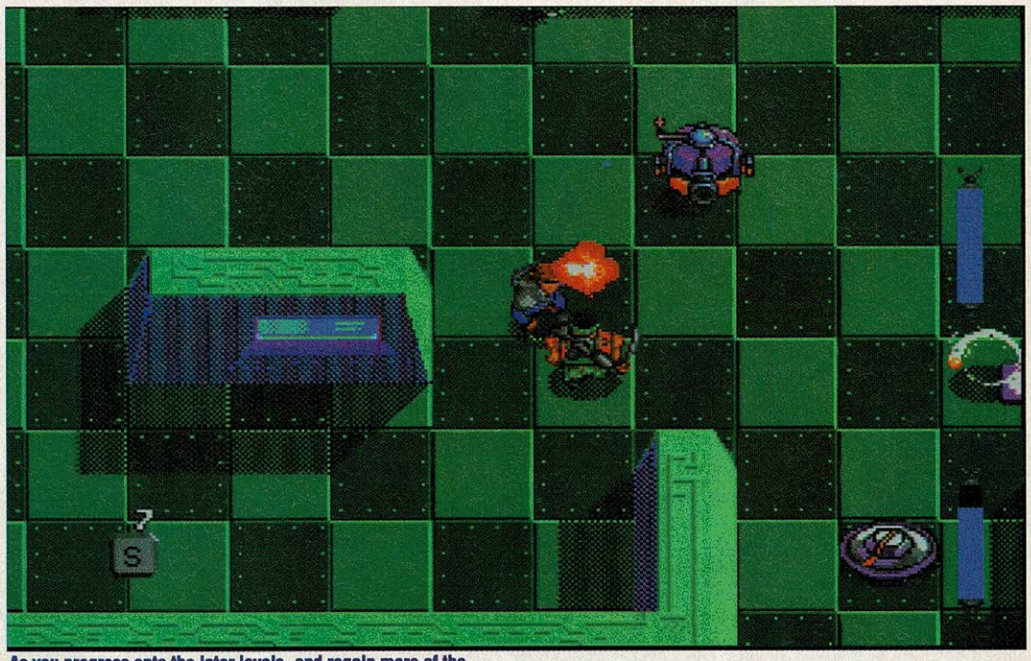
STEVE

On level two there's a secret cave in the junkyard. Travel through this to get to the card key at the end of it. When you've finished the level you will have to return to the cave to destroy the final Engine man who's armed with a massive rocket launcher.

On first impressions, this looks like a very sad and dated game. The overhead perspective of the chunky character as he waddles through the various worlds certainly looks familiar and the occasional interruption of the RPG-style conversation boxes do little to quell your fears. However, an RPG with an arsenal that would make most shoot-'em-ups blush? TechnoClash is not all it at first seems.

There is puzzle-solving and cyborg-blasting galore in this futuristic romp. The bad guys are suitably vicious and your co-adventurers surprisingly intelligent. In all, this is probably the first shoot-'em-up on the Mega Drive designed with roleplaying fans in mind. The graphics are frequently stunning and the sound more than adequate in conveying the varying atmospheres of tension and full-on violence. This is something new and certainly deserves more than a passing glance.

DAVE



As you progress onto the later levels, and regain more of the Life Staff shards, you'll need to perfect the use of weapons. Here you've just wasted a super spell, but on the right of the picture is a very useful heal spell. The further you get into the game, the more advanced the enemy technology becomes.

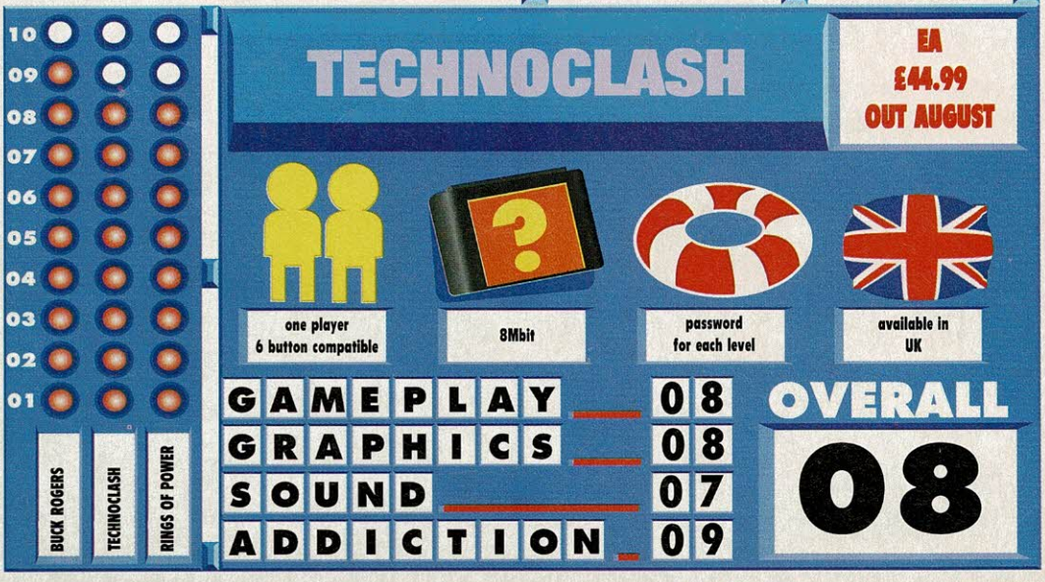
ON GUARD

When you complete level one, the ever-helpful Abaris will giv you the choice of two bodyguards to assist you with the rest o your adventure. Choose carefully as once picked, the only wa you can change is at the end of the level or by returning home

CHAZZ
This guy is really slow, so don't take him on long, fast treks around the wilderness. He's very powerful, though, and ideal for mighty Engine men.

FARGG
He's very loyal and sticks to you like glue. Choose him on the early levels as he'll do most of the combat for you.

INSTANT ACCESS



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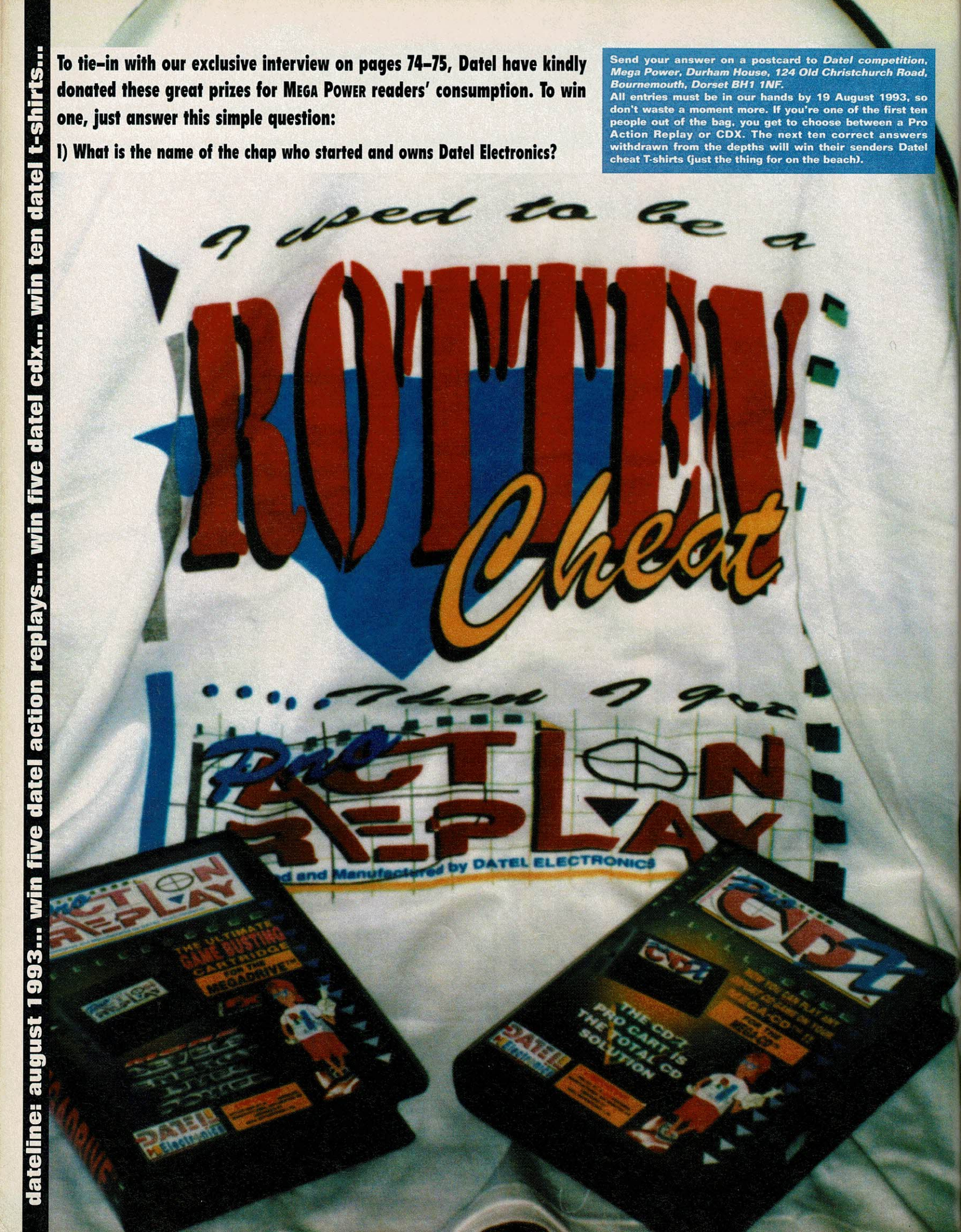

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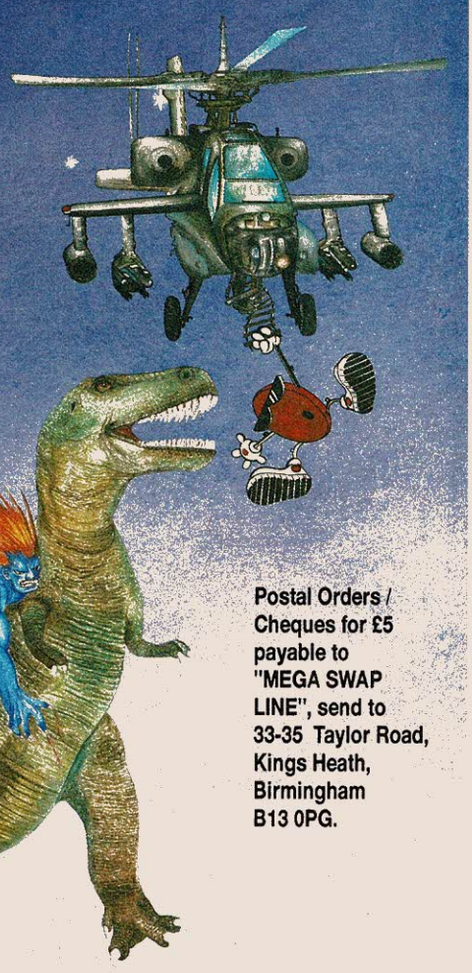

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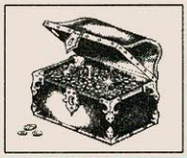

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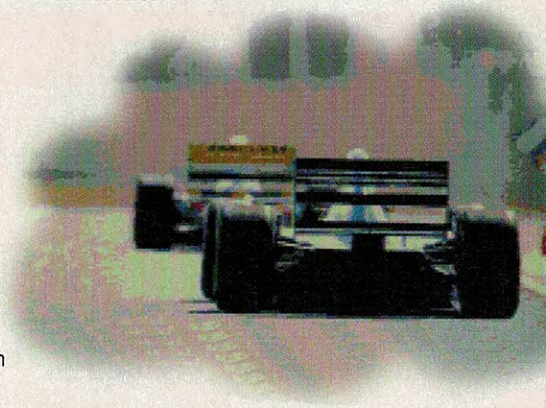
REVIEW

F1

Fasten your seatbelts and prepare for the Mega Power Grand Prix. In pole position is speedy Steve Bough. He'll take you through every chicane, every hairpin bend... or – more likely – go off on the first corner!



Domark, founded by Dominic Wheatley and Mark Strachan in 1984, have come a long way since their first title, *Eureka*. Although most renowned for their shrewd *James Bond, Trivial Pursuit* and Tengen licences, they are now becoming a force to be reckoned with in the Sega world. With their latest release, the officially licensed *F1*, they unashamedly boast that this will be their best-selling Sega game to date.

The title is simple and to the point. With *F1*, Domark promise to put all other formula one sims to shame, and the racy subject ensures attention. Nothing can beat the thrill of driving a V10-powered Formula 1 car around the greatest racing tracks in the world. It's every boy's dream come true?

Domark's publicity for the game is littered with phrases like "the fastest driving game yet", "a game that is fast", "fastest currently available", "the speed is, well, fast". These are strong claims, especially with the likes of *Ayrton Senna's* and *Ferrari Formula One* around. But will they be able to perform this feat on a UK Mega Drive, which runs slower than any other Mega Drives?

Therefore, the initial striking feature within *F1* is, unsurprisingly, its speed. *F1* is incredibly fast, but not so fast that it's out of control. The speed is set at a realistic pace – that is, if you're Nigel Mansell – and with the added option of turbo speed, you can go even faster. Hills and tunnels sweeping past enhance the thrilling atmosphere.

Domark *also* claim to have passed a few technical landmarks. The suspension is independently modelled, the four engines each create their own sound, drivers have their own personalities... I could go on, but essentially gameplay is the thing that has been lacking from other racers. Has this game got decent gameplay? That's the only thing that doesn't pop up in the PR blurb...

F1 is an extremely accurate simulation of formula one racing, but there are some very serious flaws

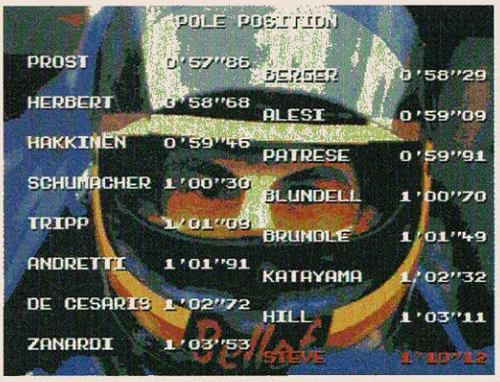
As racing games go, F1 has proved to be a pleasant surprise. I tend not to take any notice of hype where these games are concerned, as they are usually the same perspective, the same sound effects and the same monotonous trudge around lap after lap of flickery track. But even though F1 may not boast anything revolutionary in the visuals department, it is wonderfully playable. The screen update is very, very smooth and diligent use of the brakes and gears is rewarded as you slowly progress through the field. The most annoying feature of the game, though, is the time taken getting your car back on the track if you hit any of the obstacles – you just stop dead! The sound is pretty realistic (with decent collision and revving effects), but it does little to increase the driving experience. Yeah, I quite liked F1 but I wouldn't recommend it to anyone but die-hard racing fans.

DAVE

Okay, I know it's not original but a good two-player mode is an essential part of any race game. A bit of healthy one-on-one never did anybody any harm. However, that said, a lot of games seem to make a real pig's ear of these sections, but *F1* handles the dual action superbly. There's nothing quite like whizzing past your mate at 168mph and rubbing his nose in it because he's sat right next to you, although player two in this race doesn't look like he's going to be embarking upon much of a victory lap. Stuck in neutral, with the pits calling him in, I would guess that he's got a lot of explaining to do to his sponsors.

Going down the gears and headlong into a corner at San Marino can be a tricky time for even the most experienced of formula one drivers. Check your mirrors, brake, look behind you, indicate... aah, all those driving lessons weren't wasted. It also helps if you watch the scanner at the top of the screen so that you know when the corners are coming up. Ignoring this could result in a 200mph cross country spin and a head-on collision with a very large concrete bridge. The realism of this game ensures that it is impossible to just white-knuckle your way around tight bends. You have been warned.

Choose your track on this screen. As you can see, you are free to peruse all the information you may need and maybe avoid the more difficult circuits until you have grown a little in confidence and experience. On the other hand it's just a game so don't be a chicken.



Do your qualifying laps and sit back in wait for your position on the starting grid. You're in distinguished company so don't expect too much at first. Steve gave it his best shot and still ended up in last place. He claims it was a tactical move... we've heard that one before, Steve.

CAR TROUBLE OH YEAH!

1 Well this is it. Your trusty steed for the ensuing Formula One season. It's down to you to set up the various components that will determine your car's performance once out on the track. It also gives you something to blame as you lag behind the others.

2 Raising or lowering the rear wing can determine your road-handling and speed. High makes it easier to corner but slower, and vice-versa.

3 If you can't concentrate on more than one thing at once then it's a good idea to let the computer change your gears for you.

4 Once again your choice of tyres affects the road-holding capabilities of your car. Soft are best but they wear out very quickly. Decisions...

OVERALL 07

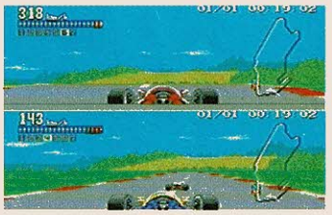
Initially, you might think, hold on what is all the fuss about? But it's because F1 is the sort of game that reveals more detail the more you play it. As you become more skilful with your driving, so the game rewards you with enjoyment. You'll find yourself involved in the Championship race firing on all cylinders, and each time vying for that prestigious pole position. With the considerable variety of options, it will take you a long time to get bored with this game. Domark's persistence for quality simulations (look at MiG-29) and undoubted time and effort spent on this game, has been rewarded. The slickness oozes from the sharp gameplay and smooth graphics. This will appeal to everyone whether they be race fans or not.

STEVE

Back to my routes

FERRARI GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE

Released: September 1992



Flying Edge's racer came out in direct competition with *Super Monaco GP II*. The whole thing was presented impeccably, but was let down by the gameplay and in-game graphics. People criticised the car control, which was jerky. Realism seriously diminished as you progressed around the track and found there was no scenery. The licence made sure that all the technical stuff was in there – like the proper tracks and teams – but it was basically no fun to play.

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP II

Released: September 1992

The follow-up to *Super Monaco GP* caused quite a stir. It wasn't because the game was rubbish, the problem lay with the fact that Sega had again chucked out a sequel without any thought (just like *Golden Axe II*).

Fans of the original got nothing more than the game they had already bought plus a few, admittedly good, pictures of Ayrton Senna and a special track done by the brash Brazilian. That alone, though, could not justify the extra £15 Sega slapped on it compared to the original.

Off we go then. Just wait for the green lights and you can start your time trial. Pressing START brings up a screen that lets you quit at any time during qualifying. Very useful this if you are miles behind and want to end the torture without going through all six of the practise laps. You can also stop practising when you get a decent lap time. You're last on the grid at the moment.

He gets everywhere, doesn't he. As you may know, Sega are sponsoring some of this year's grand prix races, and so I guess it was inevitable that Sonic would turn up in the game somewhere. I can't help it wishing, he was on the track itself so I could introduce him to my tread.

Crashing is one of the more annoying features of the game. If you slide out and hit a solid object, you stop dead and it takes about five seconds for your car to return to the track. This would be fine if there was a visible crash; if bits fell off or got damaged. But nothing, just a boring delay in the action.

The control method is fairly straight forward in this game and doesn't really require a games genius to master it. This ensures that the game is accessible to the majority of Mega Drive owners, not just driving game enthusiasts. It's simplified even further if you choose to use auto gears, although with perseverance your car's performance is much improved in manual.

You have three main choices of game type in *F1*. Arcade is as you would expect, a get-in-the-cockpit-and-go mode for the impatient player. Training is an excellent way of fine-tuning your technique and deciding how you like your car set up for each track. Championship mode lets you pit your skills against the big boys. It also lets you utilise the two-player split-screen option.

"You're the pits, maaan!" My tyres were worn but I was happy until I couldn't stand the flashing message in the right-hand corner of the screen telling me to go into the pits any longer. Getting into the pits is a bit of a pain. They suddenly pop up on you and you have to swerve in, brake and press c. However, a couple of times I hit the stanchion and the computer put me back out on the track again, doomed to one more lap just waiting for my tyres to explode. If I sound a bit bitter then it's because I am. Mastering this part of the game is very important if you are ever to finish a race. It's also useful if you want to change your tyres during a race for tactical reasons. No mechanics dashing about or attractive visuals here to help with the atmosphere of the game. A bit disappointing, really.

After being severely disappointed by the Sega con known as Ayrton Senna's SMGPII, I was really looking forward to this. Driving games are definitely my favourite genre of game, but racers also tend to produce some of the worst games around, too.

Like other great driving games, F1 is not immediately accessible. It takes ages to familiarise yourself with the car, but perseverance pays off. On the track, the response of the car reminds of the great BBC racing game, Revs. At its heart, F1 is an extremely accurate simulation of formula one racing, but there are some very serious flaws. The main fault is definitely the way the car just stops if you hit something on the track. I would have preferred to have either trashed the car completely (the most realistic) or obliterated the obstacle and sustained visible damage (plausible). But if a car hits an obstacle at nigh on 200mph, all that kinetic energy goes somewhere! Also, metal structures are placed right on the edge of the track, which would never happen on a real F1 track. Then there's the pits, which have an entry lane as long as two cars, making it all too easy to miss changing your tyres. All these faults are serious, and severely diminish the gameplay. If these were fixed, this would definitely have been a great game.

DOM

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OVERALL 07

FERRARI GP
F1
AYRTON SENNAS

The Brute Force teams from Generals Havoc and Chaos come head to head on a special mission stage. If you blow up that helicopter, you'll get some extra points at the end of the battle – even if you don't win the confrontation. Notice how the red guy sneaking up on the chopper has been frazzled by one of my flame throwers – ha, that serves the greedy git right!

At the end of each fight, the second in command from the winner's troop will give you a detailed battle report. Here you can see that General Chaos and his land of Moronicia have been crushed by Havoc's rampaging hordes. The stats show that Chaos used six medics but still couldn't save the 20 casualties. Still, he did manage to plunder 750 points.

REVIEW

War, what is it good for? Well, console games for a start. Battles between fictional foes have provided the basis for many a chart-topping release. General Chaos, General Havoc and petty officer Dominic Handy trade tactics...

GENERAL chaos

MEGA POWER

War games are split into two specific types. First there are games like *Jungle Strike* and *F-22 Interceptor* which mirror real-life conflicts with frightening accuracy, then there are games like *Gain Ground* and *General Chaos* which take a humorous yet just as shocking view. By adding an element of fun to the game, programmers can get away with having oversized weapons and innumerable gruesome ways of dying.

Previous games by Game Refuge, the team behind *General Chaos*, have included *Arch Rivals, Rampage, Pigskin* and *Xenophobe*, so you should already be aware of the sick humour to expect. This game is definitely a product spawned from twisted minds. *General Chaos* is exactly what the title implies. Pure pandemonium.

The premise is based around two warring factions, Moronica and Viceria, led by General Chaos and General Havoc respectively. These guys treat war as a sports, with them as the team managers. Players are expendable, just as long as the end of the day brings victory and the destruction of their opponent's capital city.

The soldiers at their command are each specialised in the use of one weapon. The soldiers can work in teams, or go on their own missions. But these guys need a lot of guidance, and it's up to you to give it. You must decide what type of men to send on the missions, how to position them and tell them when to fire. Hesitation is rewarded with death, so only the quickest thinkers will last long as advisers to Chaos and Havoc.

General Chaos is one on the first batch of games that utilise the EA Four-Way Play adapter, which should introduce a new soldier onto the battlefield: General Shift the Blame.

there's no arguing that General Chaos is one of the most original games on the Mega Drive to date.

Originality is not a swear word, okay! If it was, the air would be blue every time you slammed General Chaos into your machine. It's very difficult to think of another game that's anything like this. It's full-on assault rifle frenzy as your team of commandos carve up your opponent's. Mad is the only way to describe it. If you've had a bad day, this is the perfect way to let off steam. However, at best, the strategy involved is little more than chess for the brain-dead. There's no point to it. I won a whole campaign by just selecting the squad with the most machine guns and standing my ground. Just do it to them before they do it to you.

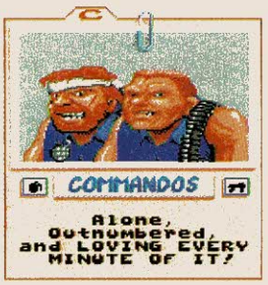
The sound is suitably manic, and the sprites are big and mean and as a two- or four-player game this is top-notch fun, but if you haven't got many friends, don't bother even borrowing this, as the single player mode quickly gets boring. This is a very small game with a very big addiction factor.

DAVE

MEET THE LADS

ASSAULT TEAM
If you want a bit of everything, these guys will do the business. They have one of every type of soldier in the team, meaning there's always prepared for the unexpected.

BRUTE FORCE
These are our personal favourites for the one-player game. These guys are as tough as nails, utilising chuckers and scorchers for all-round frazzability.



COMMANDOS
You've got to be nuts to choose this team in a one-player battle. They are great for teamplay, though, because you have better control over the chuckers and gunners.

DEMOLITION
With powerful armoury in their hands, like the launchers and one chucker, they prove a formidable team for any of Havoc's squads. Use for long-range mindless murdering.

A lot happens on the screen when a battle commences. If you blink, you'll miss something, so here we freeze the action and go over to Kate Adie for a special report on the demise of General Havoc's pathetic red-shirts.

1 This shows you have a gunner in your squad. The gunner is standard GI issue and can always be relied upon to give the enemy some long range grief. With his powerful machine gun, he can cause untold damage.
Range: 40 metres.

2 The launcher comes complete with armour-piercing bazooka. He only fires in a straight line, so it's up to you to position him properly. The enemy soon susses on to his long-range antics so keep moving him.
Range: 150 metres.

3 Chuckers are your basic grenade throwers. They will adjust their aim to home in on the nearest thing, but they only have a short range. Make sure they aren't the last man left or you'll find it difficult to kill a dodging enemy.
Range: 50 metres.

4 The scorcher is great fun to use, but has to be practically on top of an enemy soldier to have any effect. Be careful not to use him just as he's crossed water as it clogs up his gun and he only shoots bubbles!
Range: 5 metres.

5 The little eyepatches on the blaster shows that this explosives "expert" has had a few mishaps in training. If you have a special mission to blow something up, make sure you have one of these guys in your team.
Range: 10 metres.

6 General Havoc's men look in a pretty bad state. Two of his soldiers have already bit the dust, indicated by this little skull. Once players are skulled, they cannot be resurrected, even by a medic. Life as a soldier for Havoc or Chaos is usually a short-lived one.

7 See that guy on the bridge... Yeah, that one on the deck getting a real kicking, well he's the man who's called for a medic. The obedient medic is now rushing to his aid – what a pity you can't fry the medics.

8 The cursor is the most important part of your attack. It can perform many functions, but generally tells your troops what to do. For instance it can point at a position and tell a man to run there. Or if you pass it over an injured man, you can press A and call a medic.

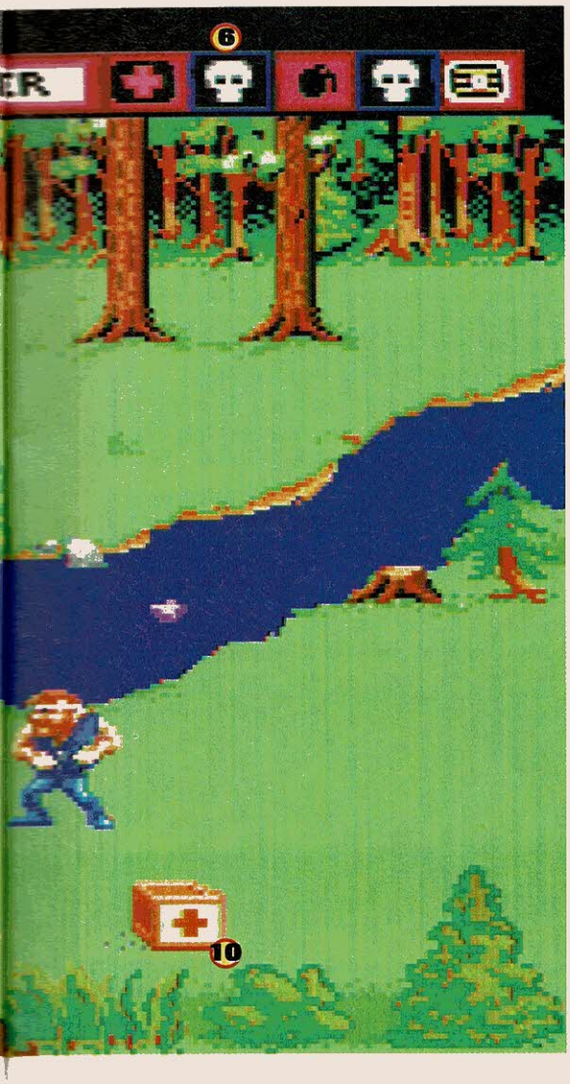
9 The creek can be crossed but water does bring a few problems. Try taking a scorcher through it and he'll fill up his flame-thrower with water and be useless for a few seconds. Men crossing water always take a long while, so don't cross too many at once.

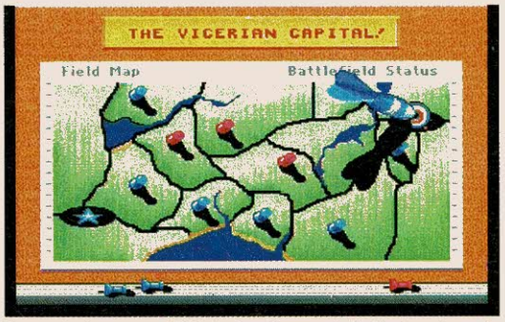
10 It's crucial to your survival to pick up as many of these Red Cross boxes as possible. They contain a much-needed blow-up medic without whom you'll find things very difficult. Locate these immediately and make sure you get them.

11 These secret papers are just one of the periphery objects classed as plunder. By sending a man over to pick them up you can gain an extra few points at the end of the battle. Ultimately, though, points account for nothing, so they have no real purpose.

12 Beneath this rocket launcher you can see a black ellipse. This, and the text at the top of the screen, indicates the launcher is currently under your control. If you press B now, he'll wade through the creek and aim for the cursor on the other side.

"Try your hardest, Havoc, feeble cretins like you never win!"

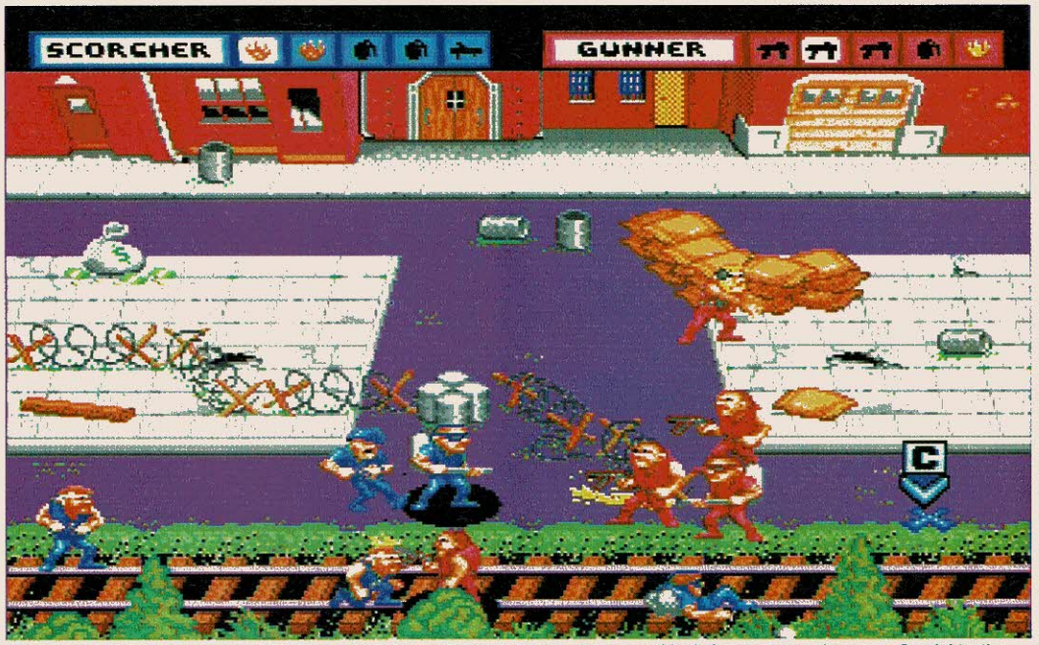




Forget the inaccurate CNN stories, the map tells the true story of who's got what. Starting out from the blue headquarters, on the left, General Chaos has conquered five territories and is now trying to finished Havoc off in his captial city.

OVERALL

08



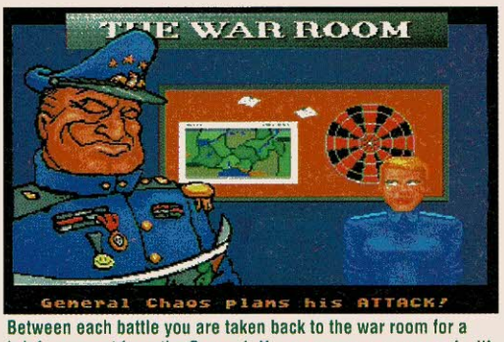
Once you've forced your way into Havoc's capital city you'll find that the resistance suddenly leaps up a grade or two. Careful tactics or a total gung-ho cavalry charge, the choice is yours. One thing's for sure, you'd better keep your head whilst the bullets fly all around you as the surest way to lose a battle is to send your forces charging all over the place whilst your enemy coolly cuts them down. Death or glory? I know which one I'd choose.

You take one look at General Chaos and immediately you want to play it, but it is only when you actually get your hands on the joypad that you realise just how much you want everyone else to play it too. While it is unquestionably fun in one-player mode, the real enjoyment is had from multi-player games, be they a team or versus match. This brings real spirit to the game as you, for instance, try to avenge your team-mate's death.

Like the old Amiga game North and South, the colour, detail and animation of the little characters really brings the game to life. Every soldier has a life of its own; you can almost see the pleasure in their eyes as they flame another enemy soldier.

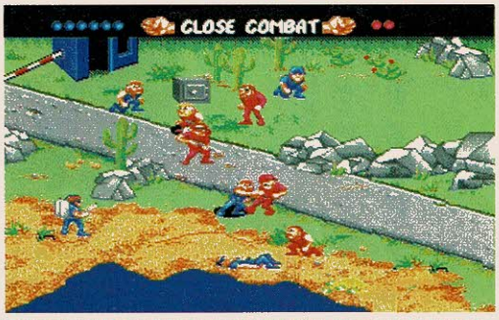
My only worry is that the fun may be a bit short-lived, especially if you haven't got too many friends coming around very often. I would have liked more time spent on the one-player option, perhaps adding another general, expanding the play area, and adding more random elements. On the Mega Drive, though, only Gain Ground comes close to this war party.

DOM



Between each battle you are taken back to the war room for a brief comment from the General. He seems more concerned with his buxom assistant than with your ensuing campaign. If only the bosses rolled their sleeves up once in a while, eh?

Along with some battles comes a special mission. This one is called Wipe the Cottage off the Map, which is pretty self-explanatory. Luckily, you've got just the men for the job to stop Havoc carrying out his mission. The ruthlessness of your team means the two scorchers can flame the enemy close up, while the chuckers can throw grenades from long distances.



Here two of the soldiers have got into such close proximity that they've entered close combat. The best advice is to hammer the punch button, thus preventing him from getting any sort of retaliatory punch or kick in. The progress of the fight is shown at the top of the screen with correspondingly coloured bars. Havoc's red guy is about to bite the dust, it seems...

The victorious general will demand front page news in his local newspaper. But this doesn't mean the war is over, because Havoc will just wait for you to be deep in celebrations and then try to catch you off guard. Capturing the capital city is your aim; the scores at the bottom of the screen count for nothing.

HA-TEN-SHUN!

Don't be a fool and jump straight into the game, you'll get frazzled. Pick up tips by visiting the Boot Camp at Snafu first.

SQUAD CONTROL
First, off work out how to move the guys into the right position to make them the most effective.

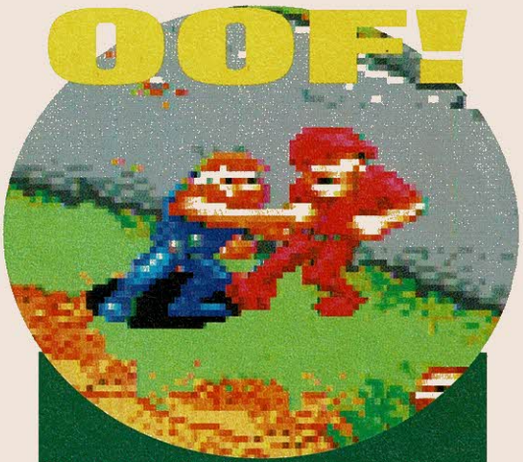
CLOSE COMBAT
Here you get to kick the stuffing out of a helpless dummy. Useful to brush up on those punches and kicks.

It doesn't take long, so everyone should pop down to Camp Snafu to brush up on their combat skills. The smug sergeant will guide you through every section.

MEDICAL STAFF
Just move the cursor (C) over the man you want to fix and press A. If you've got a medic left, he'll carry the guy off and fix him up.

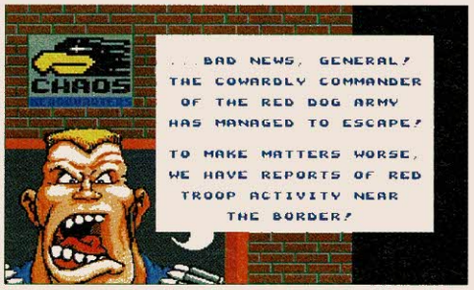
USING WEAPONS
Each of your men's weapons is effective over a limited distance. Find out how far here before you go into battle.

COMMANDOS
These guys are sneaky. Using different controls from the squads, they can follow each other round to take out targets.



Here you can see the red guy, Havoc's man, is getting a pummelling in close combat. Fights will break out whenever two soldiers both try to take the same position onscreen. Havoc's men are sneaky though, sometimes just before their energy goes, they pull a pistol out of their pocket and just shoot you.

Oh dear, General Havoc has invaded Moronicia's capital and erected a statue of himself to replace the gormless Chaos one. The cheek of it!



Just when you thought you'd disposed of General Havoc for good, along comes this loud-mouth informing you of more enemy activity on the region. Roll on level two...

Yup, there's no arguing that General Chaos is one of the most original games to come on the Mega Drive in ages. It's a madcap blast-'em-up where you carve up the enemy any way you can. If you're tense and don't fancy taking out your aggression on next door's baby, whack on General Chaos and blast your cares away.

The game looks and sounds excellent but, sadly, lacks all-important gameplay. The multi-player action is definitely an added bonus, but EA shouldn't rely on this option to sell the game. Most people want a decent one-player game first; the multi-player option is usually an occasionally useful bit of fun.

STEVE

"Come on, Chaos, you snivelling runt, get up and fight like a man!"

INSTANT ACCESS

10
09
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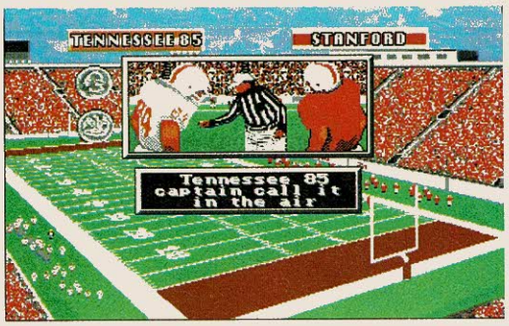
REVIEW

Bill Walsh COLLEGE FOOTBALL

American football games aren't exactly virgin ground to Electronic Arts. With three under their belt, what more could they do to the genre? Okay, how about make it a four-player game for a start? Dominic Handy donned the pads and warpaint and went in search of some cheerleaders...

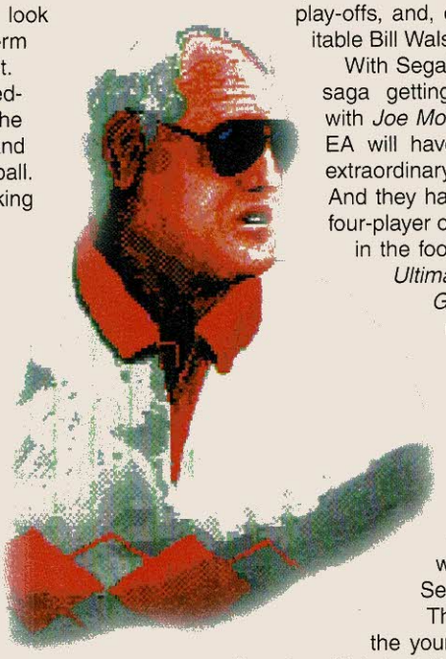
Let's face it, we're all getting a bit sick and tired of that old walrus John Madden. When he first appeared on the MD screens in 1991, it was quite novel. But now the guy is nothing more than a sweaty, overweight nobody who couldn't even get the half-time oranges, let alone train a football team. It was a shrewd move of Electronic Arts to look around for young blood, and in the form of Bill Walsh they may just have found it.

Okay, so this silver-haired, ragged-faced old man isn't exactly young, but he does inject a whole new young and untapped angle on American football. Forget the affluent, publicity-seeking prima donnas of the Raiders and Dolphins, Bill has seen and done all that (he is a former coach of the San Francisco 49ers), he's now more interested in cultivating talent, and there's no richer base of unfettered enthusiasm than in the raw and brutal college league. As far as intercollegiate sports go, nothing touches American football, it is the most supported college spectator sport by a long way – they even televise the major matches. Bill Walsh now coaches the young hopefuls of Stanford University.



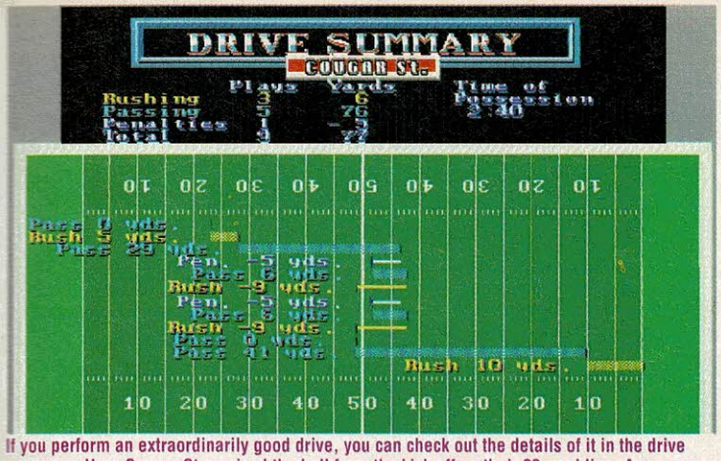
Bill Walsh College Football is jam-packed with little things that catch the eye each time you play it. Here this may look like a normal toss-up before the game, but note how the players around the pitch are dressed in the right colour kit, and how the stands are filled with the home team's supporters.

With *Bill Walsh*, EA have retained the popular features of the *John Madden* series, and added to them. *Bill Walsh College Football* contains a redesigned playbook, special All-Time Greats, and the top 24 college teams from 1992. It also develops many of the previous features, like improved audibles, better stats, two play-offs, and, of course, the inimitable Bill Walsh reports.

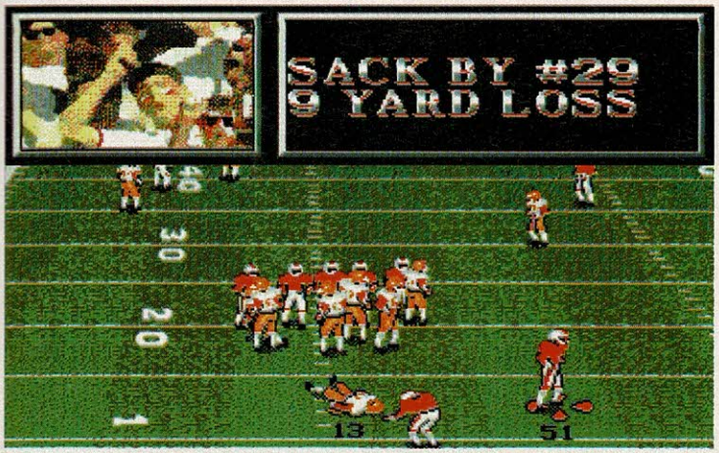


With Sega's American football saga getting an update soon with *Joe Montana* on Mega-CD, EA will have to do something extraordinary with *Bill Walsh*. And they have, in the form of a four-player option. Yes, following in the footsteps of *J League*, *Ultimate Soccer* and *General Chaos*, both reviewed in this issue, you can set up a match containing four human players. However, be warned that the version we played wasn't compatible with the Japanese Sega-tap.

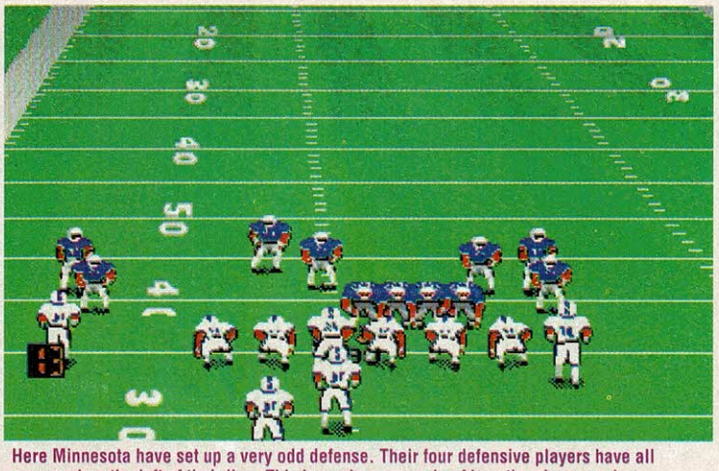
The stage is set, and the young college boys are all ready to kick the old boys into touch.



If you perform an extraordinarily good drive, you can check out the details of it in the drive summary. Here Cougar St received the ball from the kick off on their 23-yard line. As you can see, they got bogged down a bit in the centre field, but performed a beautiful 41-yard pass to get them to the ten yard line. From there, they ran the ball in for a touchdown.



The crowd go wild as Stanford sack the quarterback on a crucial third and 18 at the 19 yard line. Unfortunately, you didn't get to control the aggressive linebacker – your man, number 51, is too busy looking at the crowd – but the guy who did is performing a dance and really rubbing the quarterback's face in the dirt.



Here Minnesota have set up a very odd defense. Their four defensive players have all crammed on the left of their line. This is a prime example of how the player you're controlling has shoved other players on his side. The quarterback has sussed their game, though, and is preparing for a throwing play.

OVERALL

08

Zoom in, camera one

The top left-hand corner of the screen shows various camera close-ups of the action. Here we explain some of the sequences that could pop up at any moment...

The cheerleaders will go wild if you pull off a great move, like landing a first down or touchdown.

American football college games attract a strange breed of supporter. Here you can see one dressed in his team's warpaint.

The ref holds the ball aloft and signals a stop in play. Here he's telling everyone that the first quarter is over and it's time to change ends.

Incomplete! The ref will cross his arms a lot if you don't successful complete something, like a pass or a field goal.

It's good! Kick the ball between the posts, either from a field game or conversion, and the ref will indicate it's passed through the middle.

Offside! Jump the scrimmage line and the ref will be quick to chuck a yellow flag at the offending player.

Just don't, whatever you do, perform an extremely stupid move. If it doesn't come off, your coach will give you a right rollicking.

EA have again managed to resurrect an old format, update it and come up with a total winner.

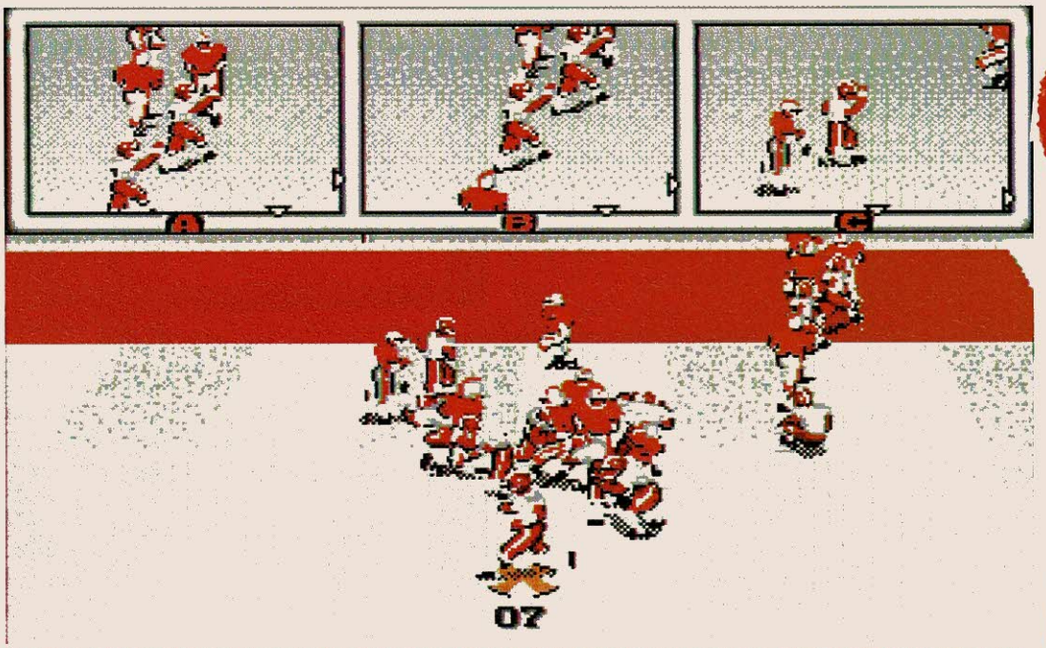
The one reason why I dislike the John Madden series is that is doesn't reward realistic play. If you play John Madden and perform the normal amount of rushing plays you would in a real game, you end up getting nowhere. That was the first thing I looked for in Bill Walsh, and I'm happy to say that it's definitely improved. You can really pull off some great rushes when you only need to gain a couple of yards. Combined with more realistic catching and penalties, I certainly didn't feel cheated by this game.

The two main changes – the addition of college teams and the new playbook system – don't make much difference. The only annoyance is that you spend a lot of time checking all the teams' stats because you haven't got a clue what is a good college team and what's a bad one.

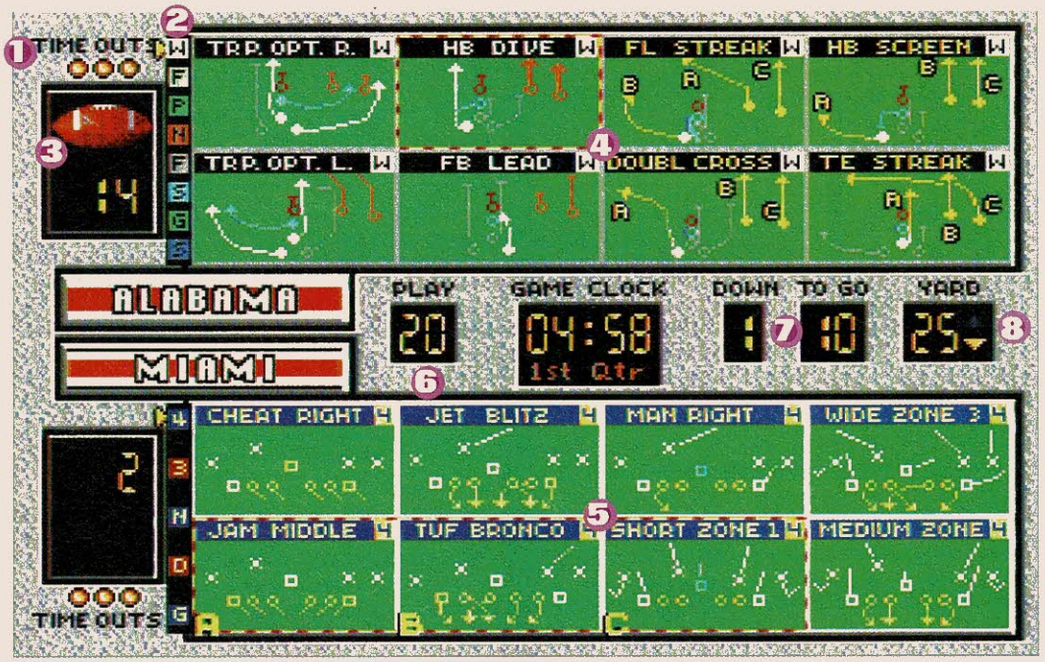
On the field, everything is very much the same. However, the addition of tons of detailed animated sequences and the close-up TV shots, makes for a very enthralling and enjoyable game.

The best American footy game around? Definitely. Worth paying £45 for another American footy game (albeit four-player) in your collection? Probably.

DOM



Controlling *Bill Walsh College Football* is simplicity itself. Here you can see a passing play in action. From the line of scrimmage, just flick the C button to snap the ball, tap it again to bring up the passing options (which are shown in the video displays at the top of the screen), and then choose which player you want to pass to by pressing the corresponding button. In the picture, player A looks like he's going to get hit, so you should probably pass to either B or C, who seem to have got the better of their markers.



The new playbook may take some time to get used to. Here we explain what each of those little boxes means.

1 Each team starts the game with three timeouts for each half. Use a timeout to either stop the clock or to re-choose your play. Use of timeouts is essential in the last few minutes of the half if you're trailing by a few points. The computer is pretty smart with its timeouts.

2 Okay, this is the main bit. By moving up or down, you can flick through all the different moves in your playbook (offensive at the top, defensive below). The letters are short for sections like shotgun, wishbone, special teams, goal line... It's much quicker than the previous method.

3 This box shows who has the ball and the score for each team. Here you can see Alabama have probably scored two touchdowns (six points each) and conversions (one each) for 14 points, while Miami just have a safety (two points). Still, the game is still young.

4 A single box outlining the move means you're in bluff mode. Just move onto the play you want, then press C. Then move off it and press C a few more times on other moves. It does nothing, but confuses your opponent.

5 The larger box outline encompasses three moves. Make the box cover the play you want to choose then press the button that's indicated below. For instance, press A now and you'll choose the Jam Middle. Your players are indicated by the little yellow symbols in the play box.

6 At the start of each play, you have 24 seconds to choose your play. This counter ticks down even if the main clock (right) has stopped because of an infringement. Only a timeout will reset the play clock. If you don't initiate the play in 24 seconds, you'll be called for a delay of game.

7 Essential to the whole concept of American football, these two counters show which down you're on and how many yards you've got to gain for a first down. You start with ten yards to progress, but can get pushed back by an aggressive defense. If you fail to gain the yardage in the four downs, the ball will be given to the opposition (a turnover).

To escape giving the ball to the opposition in your half, it's best to punt on the fourth down, and not risk a turnover. If you're within 35 yards of their goal-line, try a field for three points instead.

8 Here you can see that you are only 25 yards from you're goal-line. In such situations, it best to always play it safe as a fumble or interception near your own endzone could prove costly. Use this counter when working out how far you are from your opponent's posts when going for a kick.

I'm a bit of a fan of sports games, but I must openly admit to groaning out loud at the thought of yet another Electronic Arts American football game. Bill Walsh College Football is a breath of fresh air, though. It is still very much in the Madden mould but it is also noticeably different. The sprites are bigger and more easily controlled and the addition of the new running jump as you try to escape defensive lines is brilliant; it means you now have a very good chance of going all the way on running plays. The playbook is a little confusing at first, and I feel a little more time could have been spent here, but this is more than compensated for by the excellent new replay mode. It is now possible to view your plays from either end of the pitch, which is great if you like basking in your own glory, like me. Ultimately, the four-player option should finally make American football an exciting office game again. I like it!

DAVE

Did you see that!

Bill Walsh **is just cram-packed with animations. Some are completely blatant, but some are only noticeable using the action replay option. Here we pick some of our favourite sequences.**

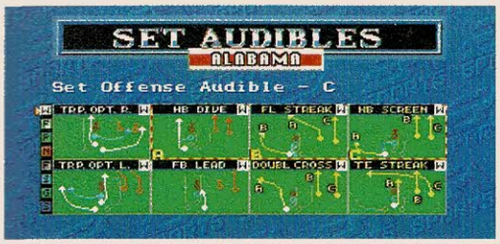
OH, YES!
Score an amazing touchdown and your player will dance with ecstasy as the crowd cheer.

INJURY!
Uh, oh. If your player gets crunched too hard, on come the paramedics with a stretcher.

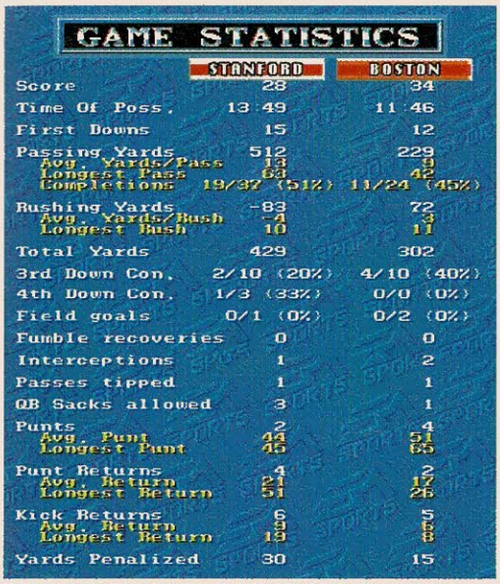
BALDY
Sometimes the touchdown scorer will take off his helmet and thank the crowd. He's just so modest.

EAT DIRT
If a defensive player performs a great sacking, he'll perform a jig and rub the quarterback's face in it.

LUCKY LEAP
A great way of avoiding tackles is by pressing the C button and leaping over them. An excellent addition.



Now here's something *John Madden* missed. Once you choose a play from the book, you can still change it by shouting your encoded instructions to your fellow players. At any time during the match, you can change what an audible call means. For instance, if you chose A here, your audible on the C button would prepare your offensive for a HB Dive. Defensive audibles are also available if you think you've set up wrong for the offensive.

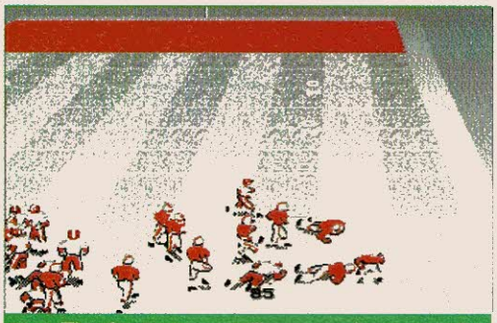


	STANFORD	BOSTON
Score	28	34
Time Of Poss.	13:49	11:46
First Downs	15	12
Passing Yards	512	229
Avg. Yards/Pass	13	9
Longest Pass	63	42
Completions	19/37 (51%)	11/24 (45%)
Rushing Yards	-83	72
Avg. Yards/Rush	-4	3
Longest Rush	10	11
Total Yards	429	302
3rd Down Con.	2/10 (20%)	4/10 (40%)
4th Down Con.	1/3 (33%)	0/0 (0%)
Field goals	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)
Fumble recoveries	0	0
Interceptions	1	2
Passes tipped	1	1
QB Sacks allowed	3	1
Punts	2	4
Avg. Punt	44	51
Longest Punt	45	65
Punt Returns	4	2
Avg. Return	21	17
Longest Return	51	26
Kick Returns	6	5
Avg. Return	9	6
Longest Return	19	8
Yards Penalized	30	15

If there's one thing that American football fans love, it's their game stats. At any time during the game, you can find out just who's leading in what area. After a game, it's useful to analyse how bad your offensive and defensive units did, and perhaps try to improve your play in that area if needed. Here you can see Stanford had real problems in the rushing area (-83 yards).

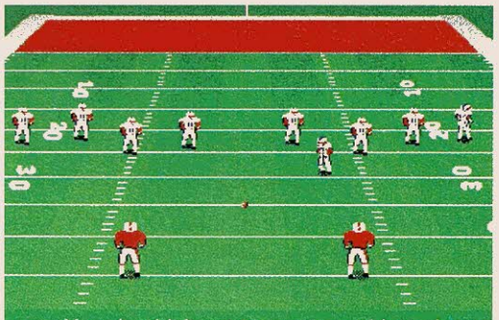
And now, the weather...

As with all sports, the outcome relies heavily on the weather. Bill Walsh has four options.



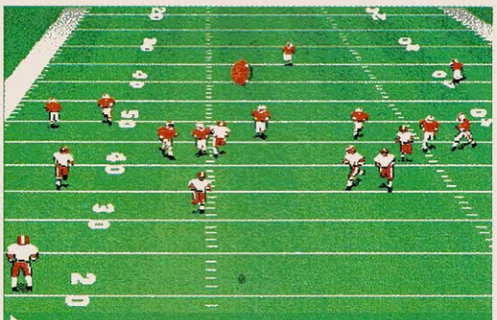
SNOW

The frosty grass will cause players to slip and slid all over the place. Wide receivers' hands will get very cold, and should not be relied upon for catching. Don't forget the Bovril.



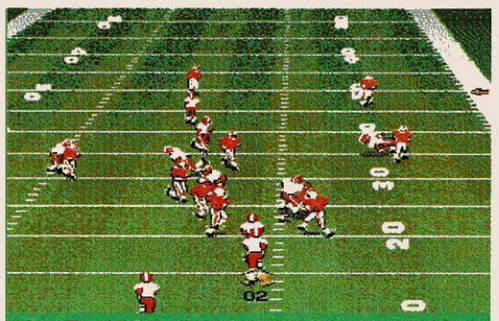
FAIR

You shouldn't get too many problems here. Throw the ball up as much as you want, as these are ideal catching conditions for passing plays. Rushes will only get you short yardage.



WINDY

Causes havoc with kicks and throws, so retain possession by keeping the ball on the ground. Don't go for long field goals unless you're sure the wind's in your favour.



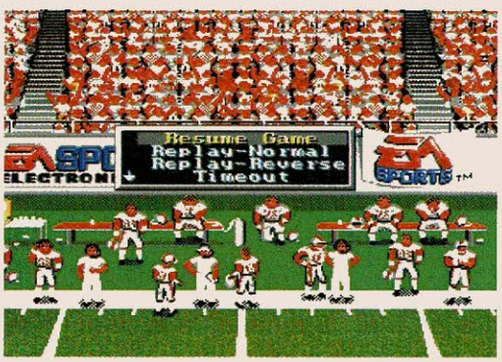
RAIN

Fumbles galore result from a rainy day's play, so keep the passing down to a minimum. As your players run, spray will fly from their feet as they tread in the sodden grass.

With the release of Bill Walsh we see a vast improvement on the previous American football games. Now, I'm not slagging off the John Madden series, because they were excellent games, but Bill Walsh has in its favour true realism. Admittedly the college circuit is different, but the refined and honed animation shows much effort has been put into this game to make it stand above the rest. EA have again managed to resurrect an old format, update it and come up with a total winner. How do they do it?

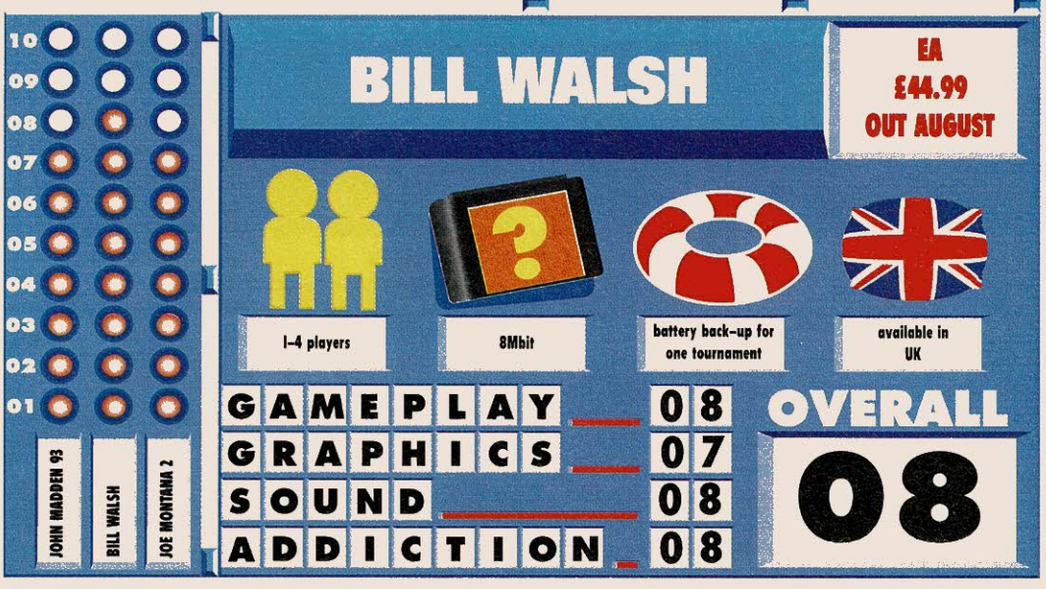
STEVE

INSTANT ACCESS



Press START at any time during the game and you will be taken to this screen. It is usually used for replays and timeouts, but by pressing DOWN, as the arrow indicates, you get other options that allow you to view game stats, other scores, change your audibles, and even get a summary of the last drive up the field. The players standing around do nothing but flex their biceps.

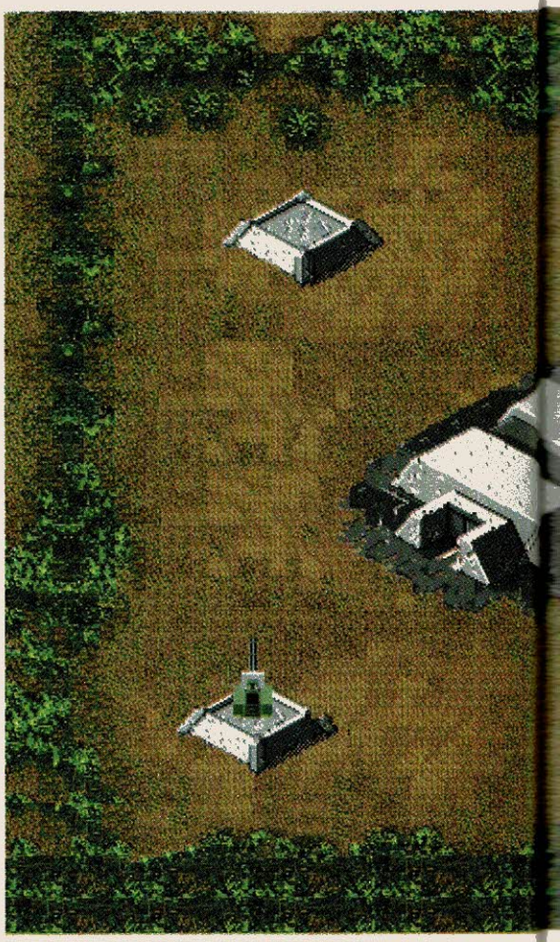
The action replay option is particularly noteworthy as you can view the play again from your angle or from your opponent's, which is ideal for settling arguments.



REVIEW

Jungle St

Sequels are strange. Film sequels are bad, second novels are difficult, follow-up albums are dodgy, but, generally, games are pretty good. Needless to say, EA – the guys who tried to do a sequel to Princess Di because she proved so popular – have slipped the programmers another few quid to tart up the old Desert Strike code and produce Jungle Strike. "But it's much more than that," protests Captain Steve Bough.



When it comes to writing games, Electronic Arts know a thing or two. Just look at *EA Hockey* and *PGA Tour Golf* for instance. There you have two leaders in their fields, and each one sequelled by a superior game. Not bad for a company that cut their programming teeth on ugly monsters like the IBM PC.

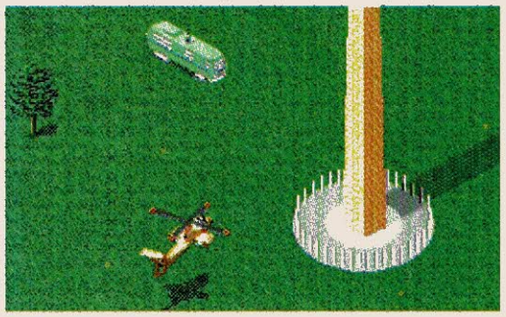
In fact EA were one of the first third-party software companies to produce games for the Mega Drive, way back in 1990. And who were the first people to produce their own carts and break away from Sega's official distribution channels? Yes, you guessed it, Electronic Arts.

Desert Strike, released just over one year ago, yet again set new ground for Mega Drive games, just when everyone thought Sega's machine would be destined to play beat-'em-ups and shoot-'em-ups for the rest of its lifespan. Here they turned the conventional flight sim on its head, juxtaposing intense action with the feeling of flight. Indeed, the only people to come anywhere near this on the Mega Drive were EA themselves, with *F-22 Interceptor*, but *Desert Strike* was much much more.

But despite its unique gameplay and topical content, there was one thing wrong with *Desert Strike*: it was just too darn small. At the time EA were limited to just 8Mbits, but with the advent of Sega's 16Mbit cart, the time is now right for a follow-up.

Obviously, *Jungle Strike* retains all the playability of the original. With twice the storage space, though, EA have more than doubled the amount of levels (to nine) and thrown in more of a variety of graphics, bigger scenarios and extra player vehicles.

At the centre of your quest is a Comanche gunship, unseen outside of a console game. Using this you must track down IBN Kilbaba, the son of General Kilbaba (who, you'll remember, was dispatched in *Desert Strike*), who has teamed up with Carlos Ortega, a South American drug lord. Using a private army, the two of them plan to destroy Washington, so if you ever want to see the Redskins play again, you'd better jump to it.



WASHINGTON DC

What's this supposed to be? Aahh, *urban* jungle, I get it. The first campaign consists of six missions, out of the game's 62. The terrorists have infiltrated Washington in order to assassinate the President. At first you must protect monuments from being blown up (odd, huh?), rescue an agent who is hiding somewhere within the level, then protect the presidential motorcade while keeping an eye out for a sniper. Car bombs are placed all over the capital, so destroy the vehicles quickly. Lastly, clear the area of the kamikaze terrorists.

Warm up on this level.

SUB ATTACK

It's now than *Jungle Strike* appears different from its prequel. On this campaign you ditch your helicopter for a spell in a hovercraft.

Here you meet the Carlos Ortega's fleet of nuclear subs, silent and deadly.

The first two missions are relatively simple, just pick up the Navy SEALs then deactivate an electric fence (okay, blow it up then!) to nick the hovercraft.

From there you must stop the delivery of plutonium, rescue an F-22 pilot, and finish off five nuclear subs. Easy.

DESERT TRAINING

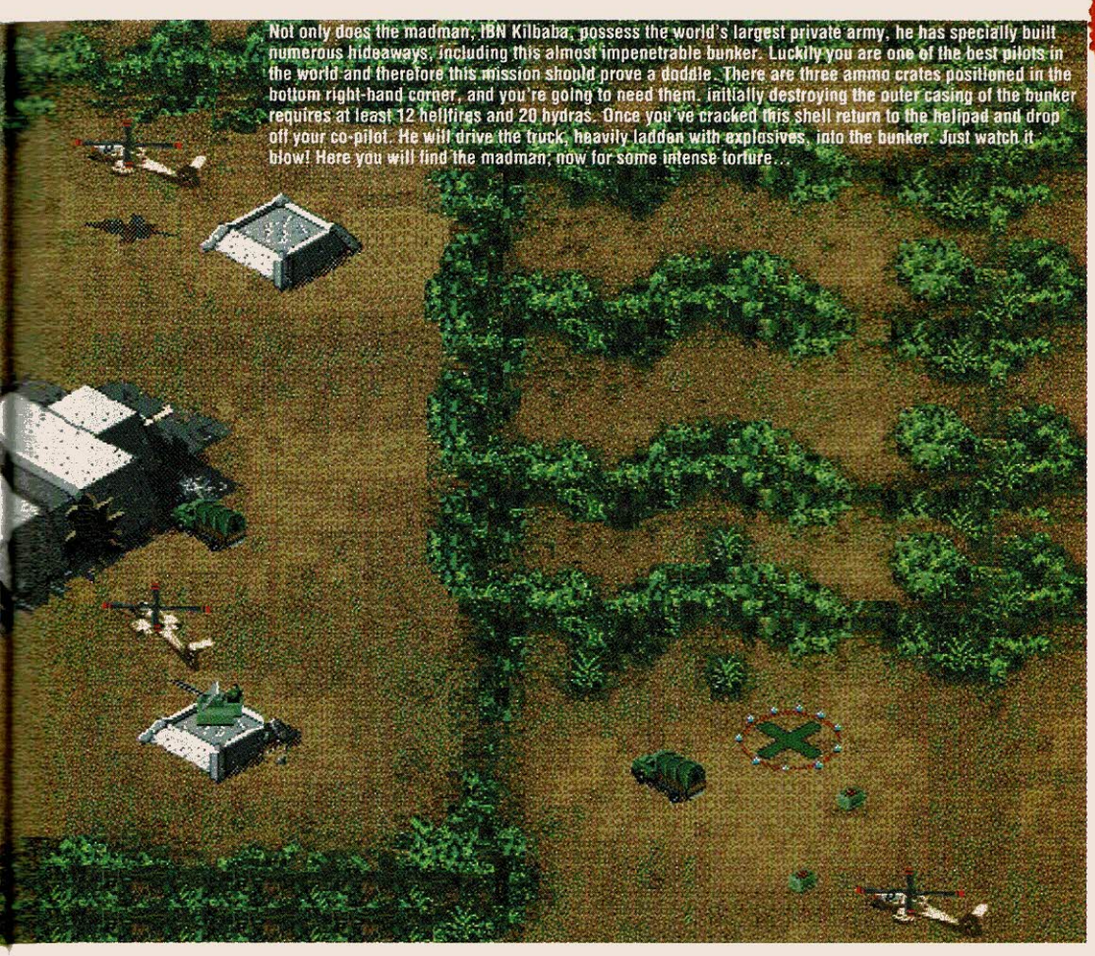
Back in your chopper, you enter the training area for the druggies. First off, blow up the camps, drop off a green beret to secure a landing zone, destroy the radar sites and rescue a comms expert. Here you really must conserve fuel and bullets, even though the latter missions place you against some very annoying dope heads.

If you've lost ammo, though, you're not gonna like the tank depot. Survive that little onslaught and you should head towards the training HQ. Blow it up (well, you're not there to paint it!), and hopefully remain intact to finish off the nuclear reactor.

STRIKE

OVERALL

09



Not only does the madman, IBN Kilbaba, possess the world's largest private army, he has specially built numerous hideaways, including this almost impenetrable bunker. Luckily you are one of the best pilots in the world and therefore this mission should prove a doddle. There are three ammo crates positioned in the bottom right-hand corner, and you're going to need them. Initially destroying the outer casing of the bunker requires at least 12 hellfires and 20 hydras. Once you've cracked this shell return to the helipad and drop off your co-pilot. He will drive the truck, heavily ladden with explosives, into the bunker. Just watch it blow! Here you will find the madman; now for some intense torture...

Phew, Jungle Strike is one big game! At £44.99 you might think, hold on, what am I getting for my money? Well this is worth every penny.

Like Desert Strike, the graphics are intricately detailed, obviously making full use of the massive cartridge space. Terrain is also wide ranging, not limiting itself to the predictable green and brown of the jungle. All the scenarios are vast, and every bit of them retains the high quality design.

Initially the sound seems similar to Desert Strike, but this has been vastly improved with great attention to detail. The weapons sound even more realistic, especially the hellfires. In fact the only thing missing is the scream of soldiers being ripped apart by machine-gun fire.

There is no doubt that Jungle Strike is an outstanding game, merging classic shoot-'em-up and strategy elements into one everlasting package. The only question is, how will EA top this one?

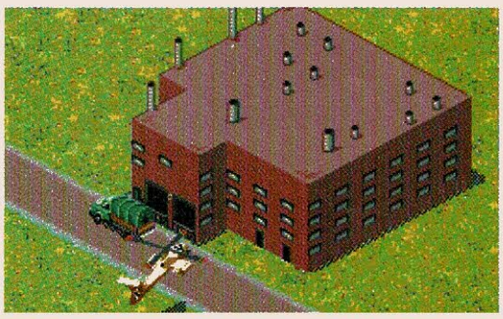
STEVE

Jungle Strike has more scenarios, more weapons, more sound, more EVERYTHING!

NIGHT STRIKE

Under the cover of night, you reach the jungle (at last!). There's nothing to bump into and the screen only illuminates when rockets go off, so if ever there was an excuse to let off loads of ammo this is it.

The main aim here is to eradicate the factories assembling nuclear weapons – a tough task, especially at night. Also on the hit list are watch towers, Apache helicopters and an aircraft assembly plant. You must also secure a landing zone with the help of a green beret, and finally capture a weapons commander.



DRUG CITY

Initially, you have to locate the houses where civilian prisoners are being kept and rescue them (*don't* shoot them!). Then ship them off to the safety of a UN depot. After getting your armour re-plated, you can fly back to raze the drug processing plants (easy, because everyone's as high as a kite), and destroy some counterfeiting factories.

After cutting off the city's power, you must locate the motorbike. It's tricky to control, but great for pursuing armoured cars. Collect the nuclear detonators and plastic explosives then you can blow up the drug lord's war room.

SNOW FORTRESS

This brings back memories of being in Kloisters, out on the piste with Fergie. The people were nicer in Kloisters, though...

Yes, now *Jungle Strike* gets snowed under with drugs. Hidden bunkers create trouble as you try to find the nuclear warheads. First off, you must rescue five POWs and Wild Bill, and old friend and valued co-pilot. He will knock out the radar sites, helping you to sneak in.

Inside the fortress, you must liberate a rogue Russian who has vital weapons intelligence. He'll grass on Ortega and find the Patriot missiles.

1. This main screen is the pilot's view of the surrounding area. Obviously without this you wouldn't have any idea of your location. This proves essential as you can locate enemy targets quickly with constant flicking to the map.

2. Hellfires are very limited with only nine per ammo crate: they are also your most effective weapon and must be used sparingly. For example, on the main screen here, you will come into contact with nuclear submarines. As the subs are very big, and extremely annoying, the hellfires are just the job for obliterating them.

3. Armour is the whole key to completion of the game. That is, if you ain't got none you won't go far! Armour against the wrong enemy can become very low in a matter of seconds, so keep your eyes on it. Dropping off rescued allies increases your armour, so lend a helpful hand as often as possible.

4. Fuel is not always easy to come by. When you notice that your fuel is around the 20 mark start looking for more. When you die or crash, you will immediately start with fresh fuel of 100 – but you don't want to die as you only have three lives and no continues.

5. Load indicates the amount of either prisoners or allies that you are carrying. It is only possible to carry six at a time, but when dropping off your load this will increase your armour. Go on, help 'em out...

Oh, I don't know, flying around in a hi-tech chopper that bounces off buildings seems to have lost all the magic it once had. Desert Strike was a great piece of software and kept me pumping my fire-button happily for hours but I must admit it all got a little samey after a while. Now I find myself playing a samey sequel to a samey game trying to convince myself of how brilliant it is, but not really succeeding.

Jungle Strike is without doubt a definite improvement over its predecessor. The graphics are undoubtedly more varied than in the first game. The stages that provide you with alternative transport to your trusty 'copter add a refreshing tilt to the gameplay, but I can't help feeling I've been here before. This is better than Desert Strike, faster than Desert Strike and ultimately a far more polished product, but I want something more from a game before I'll sing its praises – especially at £45. I want to be dazzled, I want surprises, I want magic.

DAVE

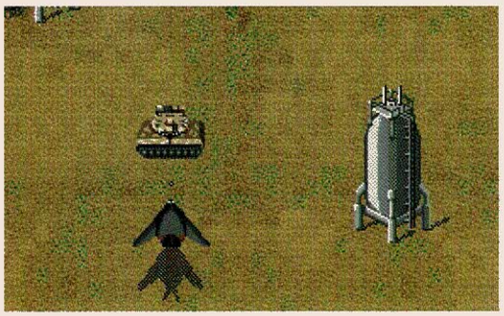
6. Status is not one that you constantly refer to, unlike map and mission, but it is imperative to check from time to time as it is very informative as to the lie of the campaign For example, it will tell you how many subs are still active and further relevant information crucial to the completeion of your mission in the right order.

7. On entering your campaign, check your set sub-missions straight away. This is so useful when it comes to working out what your targets and enemies actually look like. I started play thinking, "Oh, great, a Sheridan, what does that look like?" But with mission you need never worry, all the boys are logged and listed in one convenient section.

8. It's best to leave this reference screen set on map all the time, as that's the section most constantly refered to. What a pain it is to find yourself flying on air, then flicking to the status screen for the location of fuel, but seeing an obscure mission there instead!

9. A clever little device that flicks through what is being displayed on the map, from fuel dots to flashing mission objectives. It will also allow you to plan your flight over land without going too near to weapons that might prove detrimental to the health of your chopper. Sadly, it doesn't list those annoying little guys who cart around hand-held rocket launchers – gits!

The Danger Zone appropriately flashes as you fly into this area to rescue civilian prisoners, held against their will in this very well fortified house. It is beneficial to take out the watchtowers and the truck first as they will bombard you with gunfire. Use a couple of Hellfires on the house itself to destroy it and release the prisoners. Pick up six and return them to the UN base. Remember to pick off the soldiers on the ground, too, as they prove a bit of a pain.



RIVER RAID

At last you get your hands on the stealth bomber, a tricky little beast as it has no reverse. Yet more processing plants must be destroyed, along with bridges, drug crops and more Patriots.

Then you must move onto the fuel depot, which is incredibly well guarded for a glorified petrol station. But they're not giving away any Shell tokens here, so blast that thing into the skies.

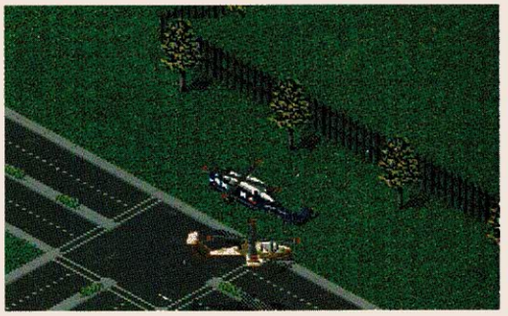
Supplies are mega important on this level, and don't be satisfied with what's on the map. If you blow up the odd pyramid, you'll find Ortega's secret stashes.

MOUNTAINS

Kilbaba and Carlos Ortega finally make an appearance in the mountains.

The electricity station provides power to Señor Ortega's luxury villa, which is such a nice pad it seems a pity to trash the place. Carlos isn't too happy either, particularly when he sees you've destroyed his private airstrip too...

Kilbaba's next, and is holed up in an extremely fortified underground shelter. You'll need to take out the initial defenders first, then drop Wild Bill near the truck stuffed with explosives which he can park outside Kilbaba's front door.



WASHINGTON DC (again!)

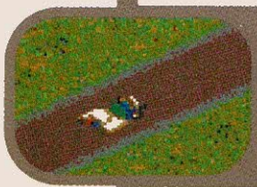
Ortega and Kilbaba have escaped, and are at large somewhere in Washington. Strangely, they've also managed to muster together some forces without anyone noticing. Various trucks holding the generals must be eliminated, and intelligence reports indicate that a fluorescent truck holds Carlos "conspicuous" Ortega. Also, keep an eye out for a petrol tanker, because Kilbaba is on a kamikaze mission to ignite the president.

And then there are the nuclear missiles on the back of four 18-wheeler trucks. With limited ammo, your shooting will have to be accurate...

ON THE MOVE

COMANCHE
It's like an old girlfriend. It handles wonderfully, is subserviently quiet and very accurate, ...*and* it doesn't owe you any money.

HOVERCRAFT
The first new mode of transport that you'll come across. This proves quite difficult to control, but you'll soon get the hang of it.



MOTORBIKE
Acquire the motorbike after completing mission four. It's quick and very manoeuvrable, which makes it great fun to ride.

THE SUPER PLANE
Fly the stealth bomber on a number of daring raids. It is well tricky to fly with no reverse and a wide turning circkle.

This Electronic Arts News Network reporter is actually an EA employee who somehow got roped into doing the titles (cheapskates!). Here she describes in an excellent digitized film sequence, how a nuclear explosion has been detected in the Pacific. The added bonus for me is that she's a bit of a fox.

Step back in time...
DESERT STRIKE
Released: May 1992

The original *Strike* game was clouded in controversy on its release last year. Following so closely after the conclusion of the Gulf war, many felt the topicality of its scenario in bad taste. Even so, that didn't stop critics praising the game as "a masterpiece of intense action".

Few criticisms can be levelled at *Desert Strike*. At the time, it had amazing sound effects (especially the thumping rotor blades), brilliant graphics and unrivalled gameplay.

Desert Strike was one of the most addictive and playable games of 92. Everything about it was near perfection on the Mega Drive. Now EA have taken that successful platform and built on it a game of immense proportions and incredible challenge. If you thought Desert Strike was too easy though, you'll love Jungle Strike.

People – like Moaning Dave Perry, for instance – may gripe about the familiar scenario and surroundings, but as my Uncle Olaf used to say, if it ain't broken why try fixing it. True, if you didn't like Desert Strike, you won't go for this – but what sap didn't like Desert Strike (bar Dave, of course)?

Jungle Strike has everything from the original plus about 250% more. That's more scenarios, more weapons, more sound, more EVERYTHING! Above all, unlike some of EA's previous sequels, this is one game that you should buy as well as the original.

DOM

Amongst the wilds of peaceful snow... hold on, that sounds like a poem, the only poetry in this is poetic justice for all these scumbags. The tanks shown here cause major grief, more than four hits from these and "low armour" starts flashing. You will also find out when playing this level, there are underground bunkers hidden under the snow. *Nice*. The only way to find these is to look for the marks. Good luck!

On the mountains level, supplies are in short, er, supply. Luckily, located around this campaign are several pyramids underneath which are fuel, ammo, armour and, if you happen to find it, an extra life, indicated by a red cross. These little beggars don't appear on your radar map, but just happen to pop up when you need them. The only advice to give is, keep an eye out for everything!

MAD DOGS

IBN KILBABA HAS MANAGED TO ESCAPE AND REAPPEARS ON THE FINAL CAMPAIGN. FINISH HIM OFF WITH ONE HELLFIRE.

ORTEGA IS DRIVING A TRUCK FULL OF EXPLOSIVES STRAIGHT AT THE WHITEHOUSE. STOP HIM BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

INSTANT ACCESS

10
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GAMEPLAY	09
GRAPHICS	08
SOUND	08
ADDICTION	09

OVERALL
09

REVIEW

BATMAN R...

Our nocturnal mouse-like hero is back, just in time to save Gotham City from the evil clutches of the Penguin. Luckily, Steve "Leather Flappers" Bough returns from a wild beach party just in time to meet his increasingly mythical deadline... Needless to say, Gotham City doesn't stand a chance!

The launch of the UK Mega-CD back in April caused a considerable stir not only in the console world, but also in the "real" world. The console was arguably one of very high specification, but unfortunately it was lacking in the one thing that was crucial to sales – games! In the first three months, Sega claim to have sold over 65,000 units in this country, leading and cornering the market for CD entertainment – and all without any decent games!

Up till now, having played most CD games, I have failed to be suitably impressed.

Yeah, yeah... Unlimited memory... CD is the future... Look at the load up screens! I'm sorry to sound cynical but I've heard it all before and playing this game I can't help feeling I've seen it all before too. Maybe that's a little unfair but on the whole this is little more than an average driving game, circa Road Blaster FX, combined with your standard platform adventure.

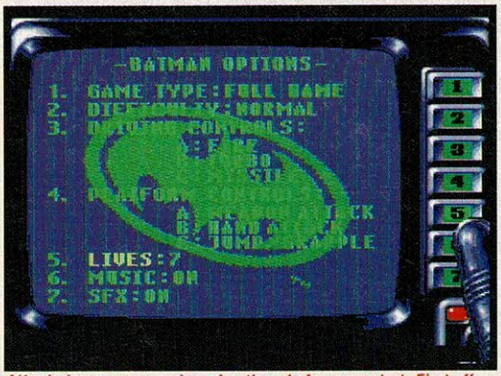
The animation is a little stiff and, as seems to be the way with a lot of CD titles, confused and blurred. The sound is great though; it really thuds along as you wind your way through the shadowy world of Gotham City, but it's simply a case of too little too late. If you've made the mistake of buying a Mega-CD then I guess you have no choice other than to buy games like this. If you've not bought one and wonder what you're missing, the phrase "not a lot!" springs to mind.

DAVE

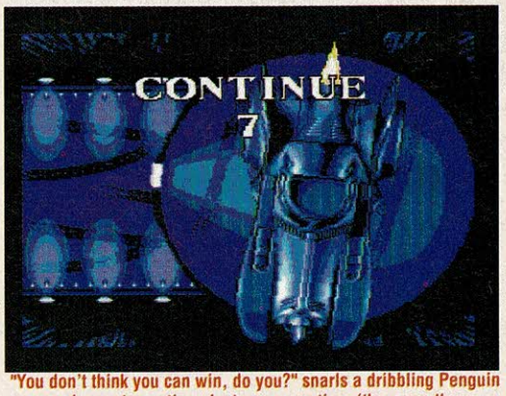
Maybe Sega were being coy in their early releases, seeing whether the Mega-CD sold or not, and not investing too much. That's understandable to a certain extent, but doesn't it make your blood boil? You've just spent £270 on a console and another £45 on the game and all you could end up with is *Black Hole Assault*! The Mega-CD has a long way to go in terms of software quality, so every release is treated with the hope that this one could be the game to break into the new ground. The Mega-CD isn't total interactive reality at the moment, as Sega claim, but it could be... *Batman Returns* just could be that game...

...But it's not. Yet again Sega have lazily taken the Mega Drive version and tarted it up a bit. Still, the addition of five new stages does sound quite promising, but when you realise they're all essentially the same – a driving section based on Ocean's original *Batman* computer game – things aren't that impressive. But with the potential memory available for this massive movie tie-in, Sega have also commissioned a top soundtrack and some neat sampled speech. Untapped potential, but still a step forward nonetheless.

1. The Utility belt has loads of useful weapons. None more so than these Batarangs, These dispose of lesser mortals, and there are lots to collect.
2. Smoke Bombs blind your attackers for a few seconds giving you a chance to hit them. They are not overly effective, usually the last resort.
3. Grappleline shoots out a most effective grapple, which will knock your opponents' energy for six. Unfortunately they are few and far between and go very quickly.
4. Super Batarang is by far the most effective weapon Batman has. It will seek out an enemy and deplete a huge chunk of its energy.
5. Swarm of Bats; open Batman's cape and watch his closest friends emerge and chew on the attacker. Leaves a substantial dent in their energy.



Alfred gives you a number of options before you start. First off, wop up the lives and knock down the difficulty to training level. Now just choose between a full game, or just the driving or platform sections. Controls might need a fiddle too...



"You don't think you can win, do you?" snarls a dribbling Penguin as you choose to continue just one more time (there are three available). The Batmobile then rotates and zooms off into the distance to battle once more – very impressive.

RETURNS

OVERALL

07

The fifth stage of the second driving level takes you through the claustrophobic tunnel. Super smooth scrolling walls and road make make it a delight to watch – even if it's a pig to play! Scrape the walls and sparks will fly off the Batmobile, but don't worry, it won't sap any energy. However, the tunnel environment does mean it's very difficult to avoid those blasted missiles that the bikers throw back at you – and those guys DO sap your energy.

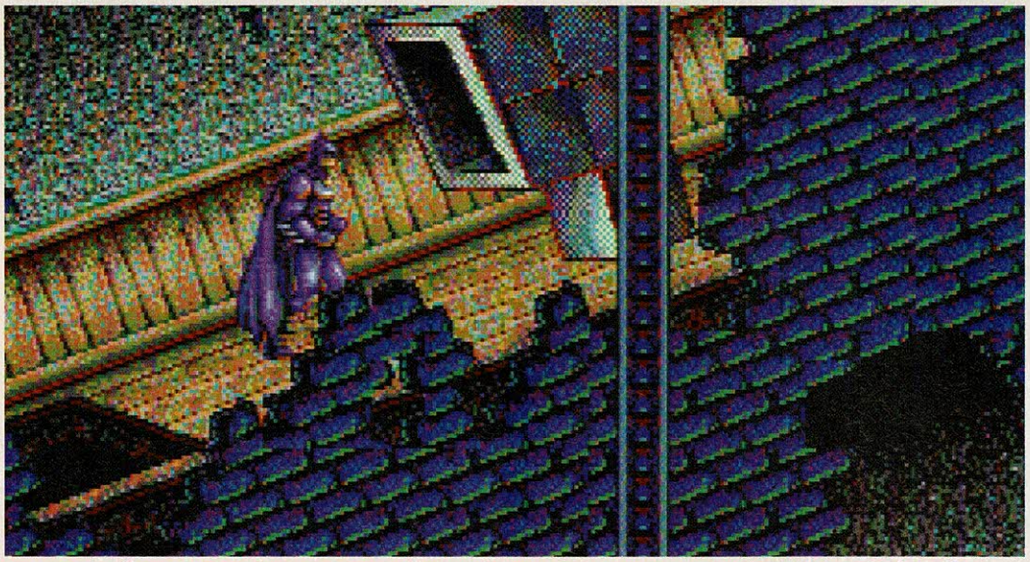
deliciously realistic FX, great combination of music and scorchingly addictive race sequences

GOING FOR A BURTON

Released in 1992, and, like the original Dark Knight-inspired film, under the direction of Tim Burton, Batman Returns proved remarkably successful at the cinema, confounding the critics who panned it. Costing just under $50 million, the film retained the glorious special effects and pulled in more big stars. Starring alongside Michael Keaton were Danny DeVito as the Penguin, Michelle Pfeiffer as Catwoman, and Christopher Walken as local business tyrant Max Shreck. And even though Jack Nicholson couldn't reprise his role as the Joker (he fell to his death in the original), sly Jack also gained a cut of the profits through a clause in his original contract.

This strange clown jester guards the entrance to further stages in the gothic castle on level one. Yet again they are a real pain to defeat but for further progression in the game you must work it out for yourself! If in doubt, just be patient and wait for the clown to do his thing then let off a Batarang. Some guardians require you to hit them with both your weapons and your fists so keep a constant eye on your energy to see if your mode of attack is having any effect.

In contrast to the original's menacing atmosphere, Burton chose to set the sequel in the snowy surroundings of Gotham, complete with festive celebration. Integral to the plot was the spiralling decline in popularity of the mayor. In a nutshell, Max Shreck latches onto the Penguin and tries to make him mayor. Meanwhile, Catwoman (a former employee of Shreck) gets involved professionally with the Penguin and, romantically, with Batman (both in and out of their respective alter egos). Consequently, the film does become rather cluttered with stars all demanding your attention – and the fact that Batman is being set-up as a fall guy for all the catastrophes gets lost in the ensuing melee. Still, it's already reaching the bargain bucket at your local video store, and should be on



After defeating Catwoman in the first part of level two, you get thrown upside down into a very odd platform level. Here the screen scrolls at a 45° angle – which is incredibly disorientating, especially when jumping over the numerous holes in the floorboards (there's only so much Ronseal's wood filler can do, you know). Not only do the annoying bouncy clowns make a reappearance, but also some infuriating air conditioning funnels. Take one step too close to one of these and you could be thrown back up the level and have to restart from scratch – as ably shown here by the ever-helpful Steve.

Don't get me wrong, I personally think Batman Returns is the best CD game so far, but with the weak CD competition, it's not too difficult. The driving is some of the best I've seen, with near perfect scrolling. Unfortunately, it's let down by the platform levels which are exactly the same as the Mega Drive. I feel that with the addition of fresh ideas into this game, Sega would have come up with a total winner. As it is, there are deliciously realistic FX, a great combination of ambient and rocky music, and scorchingly addictive race sequences. But all this is clouded by the infuriating gameplay of the platform levels.

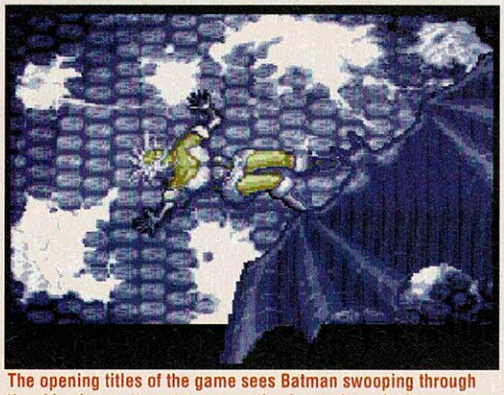
Ultimately, it seems that when a game has been flogged as much as Batman, ideas start to run out. With four games under his belt, it's time our flapping wonder hung up his rubbers and concentrated on Catwoman.

STEVE

This big, extremely hard bloke will make minced meat of you. The only way to stand a chance is to have your special weapons ready at hand. Super Batarangs will deal with him, but more than likely you'll have to fight like a man-type-bat-thing. To make matters worse, he will constantly bombard you with objects. What a nice chap. Next please!

It ain't called a dark game for nothing. Luckily, being a nocturnal creature, Batman has superb night vision and can spot trouble looming. Good job, too, as these blighters cause Batman severe grief. Try not to waste your Batarangs on them, use the old-fashioned method of self-defence and spare your weapons.

As you can see, poor Batman's car is on fire. Causing this is the elusive and extremely dangerous clown-faced tanker in the middle of level three. As with everything on this game, destroying it is easier said than done. But like most of the guardians, you have to suss out the tricky git's pattern. Take a tip from us and stay well back, constantly firing and swinging from side to side. You'll lose just as much energy from hitting the rocks on the side of the road as you will from the balls of fire, so concentrate on staying on the road. Unfortunately, the sad sap driving the car here (probably Steve!) is, as you can see from the blue bar, down to his last energy blip. Meanwhile, the red blips indicate the enemy hasn't even been hit once. Back to Catwoman, Steve...



The opening titles of the game sees Batman swooping through the skies in an attempt to rescue the doomed carnival queen. Batman has been framed with her death, and now you must put on his cloak and clear his name.

Only Cobra Command (née Thunder Storm FX) has ever impressed me on the Mega-CD, purely because it was the first original approach to a CD game. With the arrival of Batman Returns, I was hoping for more groundbreaking stuff, but Sega have only concentrated on 50% of the game. It is because the driving section is so impressive, I can't help thinking there is untapped potential in the other 50% of the game.

If you liked the Mega Drive game though, you're going to flip over the brilliant additions Sega have made to the CD version. Primarily, there's the smooth driving stages, of course, but there's also a great CD soundtrack, composed by Spencer Nilsen, the same guy who did the ambient Ecco soundtrack. This is just as impressive as the driving section, and combined with the samples of the Penguin and some spectacular storybook sequences, creates a terrific atmosphere.

The main problem is not just the simplicity and frustration of the platform section – although this is bad enough – it's the unfairness of the driving sections. Inexperienced players will soon get despondent with the initial stages as the fire engine on stage one is like a brick wall till you can suss out the formation in which the ladders pop out. The training/normal option seems to make little difference to the game, and as such you'll need to be a real fan to persevere for more than a day or so.

DOM

Step bat in time...

BATMAN
Producer: Sunsoft
Sunsoft were the fortunate company to gain the Batman rights for all computer formats, and to credit them, they designed every single game individually. While the Sunsoft import game was released in Japan way back in late 1990, Sega held on till July of 1992 to throw it out officially in the UK – to tie-in with Batman Returns' cinematic release. But even in 1992, the game was well received, and praised for its challenging gameplay and close ties to the film. Batman fans should certainly dig it out.

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER
Producer: Sunsoft
Spinning this one out in competition to *Batman Returns* was quite smart of Sunsoft. Here the eponymous characters are based on the Sixties TV series stars played by Adam West and Cesar Romero. Only available from importers at the moment, this is again worth searching out. The conventional platform game is improved by some sharp and colourful graphics, enhancing the camp atmosphere of the original TV hit. Like all Batman games, this received a warm reception.

BATMAN RETURNS
Producer: Sega
Sega grabbed this licence as soon as it left the studio, way back in early 1992. Taking inspiration from Ocean's successful movie tie-ins, Sega settled for the predictable platform format, with a strong brush of movie magic. The game closely follows the film's dark atmosphere – but also the weird, twisted influence of the Penguin and his cronies. Although most reviewers praised the graphics, they also moaned about the frustrating difficulty level – hey, better than being too easy, though!

TAKE YOUR PICK

Batarang
Effective and in large abundance. Use against every possible victim without mercy.

Pulsing Heart
This will restore your energy to full. Very useful but hard to find, so don't waste them.

Swarm of Bats
Watch your enemies squirm as they're set upon by these killer creatures. You'll get a lot of pleasure from watching the pain.

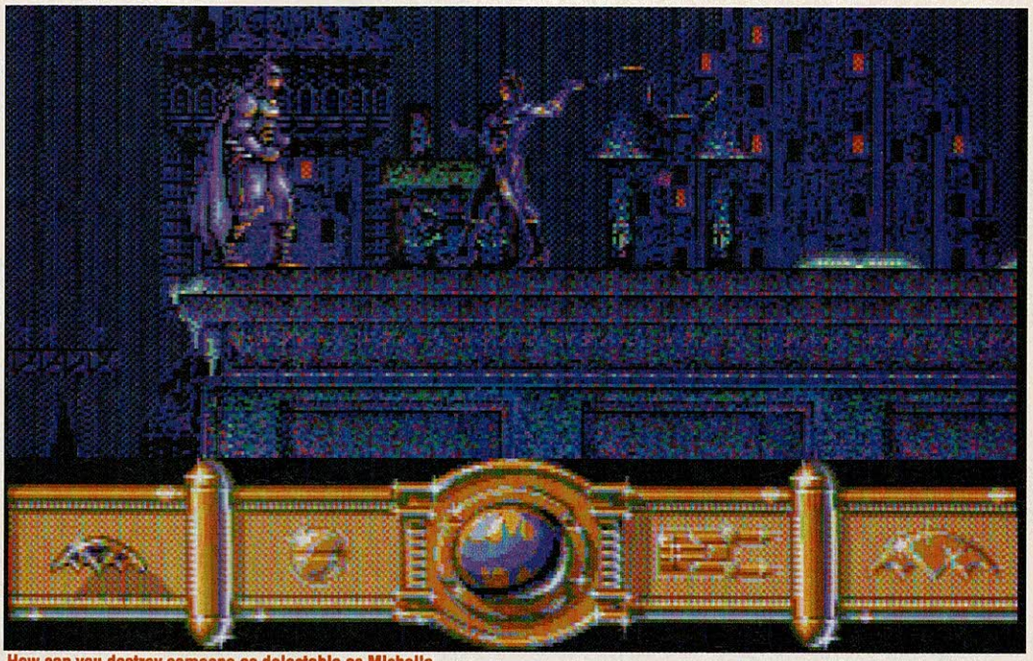
Grappleline
One shot from this and you'll knock the stuffing out of these wimps. Again, not many about but they do the business.

Missiles
Located on the driving level, they are few and far between. Use carefully as they are effective, but not always the way out.

Smoke bomb
As already described, they will temporarily blind your opponents, giving you time to punch their lights out.

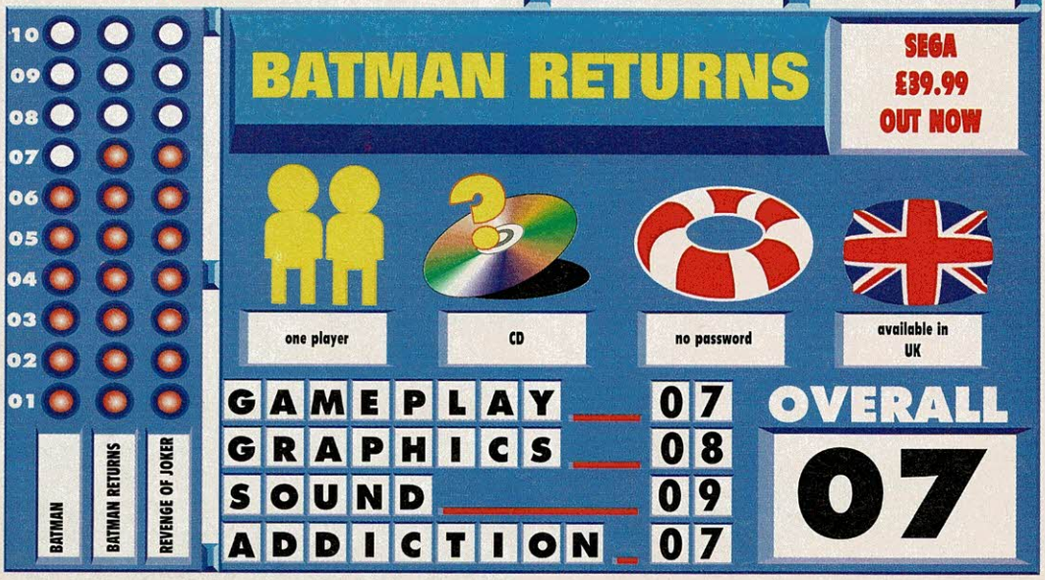
Still heart
This will increase your energy bar by four. Essential to find and pick up to prolong your length of game.

Super Batarang
Your most effective weapon. Don't waste them as they are your most valuable weapon; guard them with your life.



How can you destroy someone as delectable as Michelle Pfeiffer? Pah, Batman is as hard as nails and doesn't care about women. Hey, it's a living, and Batman doesn't care! The gal is reasonably easy to defeat from this position but she'll crop up again later for all you cat lovers.

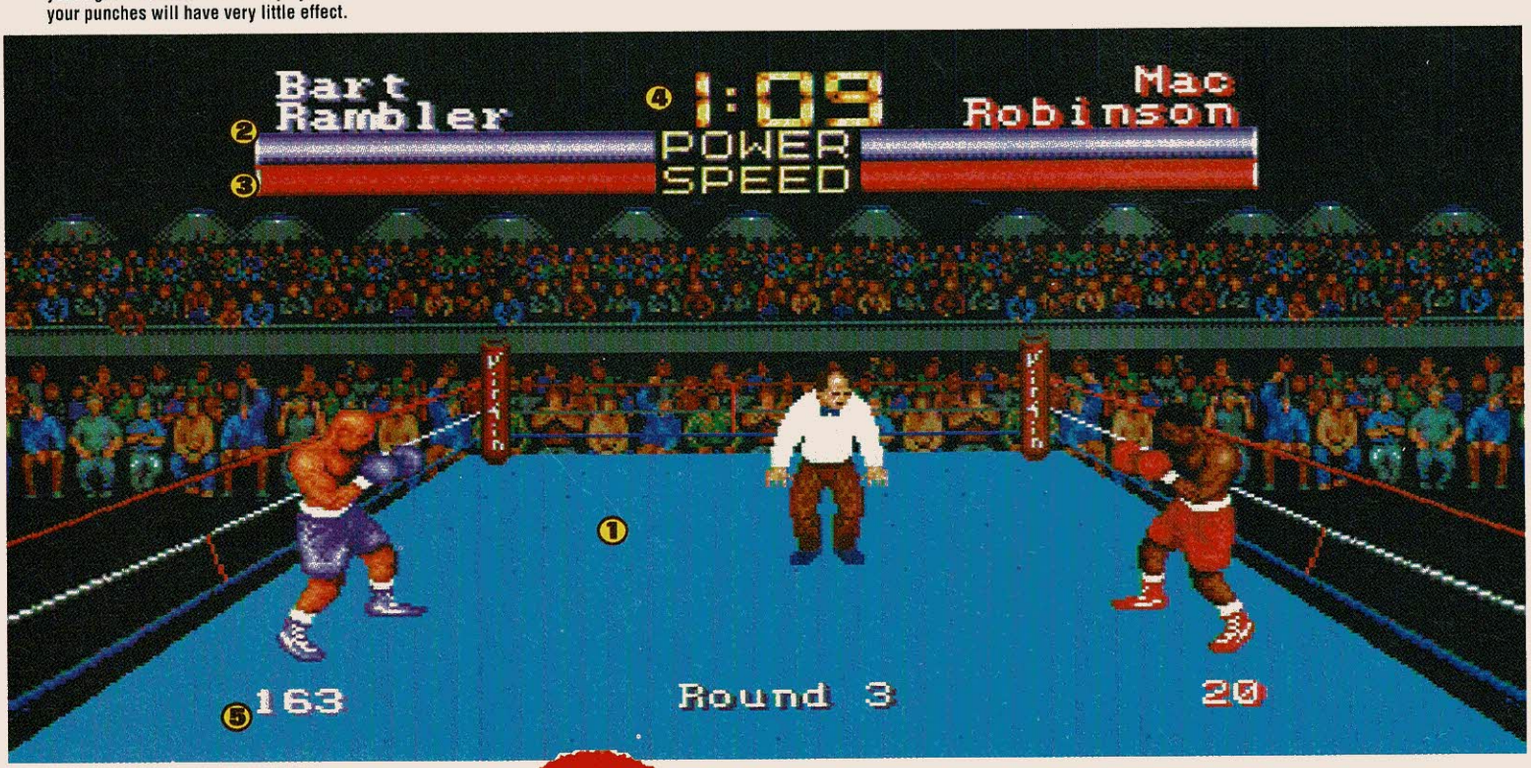
INSTANT ACCESS



REVIEW

Muhammad Ali's heavyweight boxing

It's strange that a sport as straightforward as boxing has never really been successfully emulated on the Mega Drive. They're either jerky, slow or just downright unplayable. Trust Muhammad Ali to come along and change all that. Dave Perry takes a slugger's-eye view of Virgin's new release.



1. This is where the action's at. The ring is viewed in full 3-D and rotates so smoothly that the battle is very rarely interrupted by jerky updating or slowing down.
2. Your power bar is, in a sense, your lifeline. It dictates how powerfully you are hitting and how much strength your fighter has left. If this drops you are in trouble and your punches will have very little effect.
3. Keep an eye on this if you want to land those lightning fast combinations and bob and weave to keep out of trouble. A slow fighter is a very easy target. If this *and* your power bar drop so do you!
4. Timekeeping is very important in this game as very often you will have to pace your fight, looking for points rather than knock-downs. You can set the round length on the options screen.
5. These are the most important figures in the fight. They are a record of how many punches you have actually landed. If the fight should go the distance these will be the only scores that will count. You gain no points and lose power for punches that miss.

"Who's the heavyweight champion of the world?" Well, this cart is actually.

I have no hesitation in recommending Muhammad Ali's to anybody looking for a great boxing game. It is fast, smooth and sickeningly real. Bone crunching thuds and the occasional spray of blood from an open wound leave you in no doubt that you are in a championship battle. The choice of a frantic arcade mode or a more precise simulation method of control means that there is a game here for everyone.

On the down side, this definitely lacks an instant replay screen and could have been made even more exciting with a custom fighter option but that's really only nit-picking at what is a superb piece of software.

DAVE

I coulda been someone, I coulda been a contender, I know it. The trouble is boxing hurts so bloody much, I'd rather sit and dream in the comfort of my front room than stand toe-to-toe with a human bulldozer who's using my head for target practice. If only I could slug it out without having to have my gums split open. If only there was a decent boxing game for my Mega Drive. Fame without pain.

Muhammad Ali's Heavyweight Boxing at last comes close to fulfilling my wishes. Giving me that feeling of "being there" without the bruised brain tissue. This really is pixellated pugilism at its best. Full 3-D perspectives instead of ropey side-views, a vast array of punch combinations to rain down upon your hapless opponent and screaming crowds yelling everything from encouragement to "hit him, ya bum"!

The gameplay itself comes in two different formats. Firstly, you can choose to play in arcade mode with your actions differentiating only between jabbing, defending and swinging wildly for that quick KO. This can be great fun if you just want to get in there and fight without having to worry too much about moves, but the best way to play has to be by using the simulation option. Here you have complete control over your prize fighter. You decide whether to throw high punches or low punches, left jabs or right jabs and, given time and practise, can develop your own stinging combinations.

As you happily punch away, it is important to also keep an eye on the power and speed bars at the top of the screen. These indicators tell you how you and your opponent are doing physically. A well-timed barrage can leave your adversary stunned and staggering, waiting only for you to deliver the killer punch. But beware, too many punches drain your energy and quite often it's worth covering up and conserving your strength so you can mount a more powerful attack later in the round. All this helps add to the realism of the game and makes thought a very important factor.

In all there are ten different fighters within the game, which is perhaps its greatest fault. Apart from Ali, they are all fictional but each has his own particular special defensive move which gives him an identifiable style. It's a shame that they couldn't have been based more on Ali's old adversaries, and many of those classic battles like "the rumble in the jungle" and "the thriller in Manilla" relived.

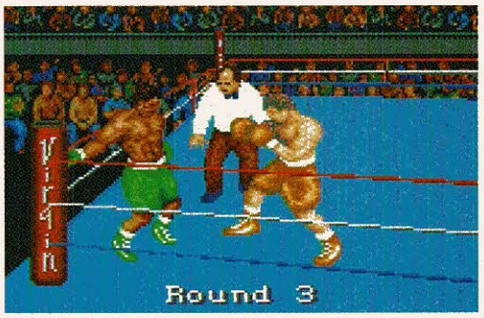
The tournament is suitably challenging and, as you may expect, sees you taking your chosen exponent of the noble art from tenth in the world to champion in nine increasingly tough fights. The difficulty curve is well set and bouts often go to points decisions, but it is here that I also have to bring up two points of contention. Firstly, if you go the distance, it doesn't seem to matter how often you knock the other guy down, the fight is always awarded to the player who landed the most punches. Secondly, as you climb the rankings there is no opportunity for you to improve your fighter's personal stats. This leaves you in a bad way when you meet the champ in the final unless you've chosen one of the top fighters.

A few technical inaccuracies perhaps, but at the end of the day, there's nothing like being able to float like a butterfly and sting like a bee.

OVERALL

08

Bone crunching thuds and the occasional spray of blood leave no doubt that you are in a championship battle



The longer you play, the more you start to notice the many subtle touches that make this more than just a puncher's game. In the picture above, Ali visibly taunts Cooper by swinging his fist mockingly behind him. He's lucky it's Marvin and not our 'Enry or he could be sucking canvas very soon.

MUHAMMAD ALI: THE GREATEST?

Born on 17 January 1942 in Louisville, USA, Cassius Clay shot to world fame as a brash young fighter with no respect for the more experienced boxers who stood in his way. Declaring himself "The Greatest", he bullied champion Sonny Liston into fighting him in 1964 and promptly destroyed the man's career in two widely televised fights. From that moment on it seemed he was untouchable. He wrote poems about his opponents, predicted the round he would knock them out in and was so fast that he rarely got seriously hurt in a bout.

Shortly after becoming world champion, he changed his name to Muhammad Ali and joined the Nation of Islam. In 1967 these religious beliefs prevented him from going to Vietnam and he was promptly stripped of his title and banned from boxing. It would be four years before he was allowed back in the ring.

On his return to the ring, he had clearly gained weight during his forced exile and whilst his class allowed him to overpower his early opponents his first attempt to win back his world title saw him battered and bruised in a brutal confrontation with Joe Frazier. He lost on points but had fought for most of the fight with a fractured jaw!

Over the next three years the famed Ali shuffle was traded in for a new cunning and his fights became carefully controlled tactical victories, interspersed with occasional reminders of his awesome power. When he climbed into the ring with the supposedly unbeatable George Foreman in 1974, the world wondered whether he still had the heart to beat such a formidable young opponent. Ali stood against the ropes for eight steamy rounds in the jungles of Zaire as Foreman beat on him with merciless ferocity. Then, as his corner were screaming at him to fight back, he tore into Foreman and sent him crashing to the canvas, knocked out for the first time in his career. He had planned the whole fight from the start and calmly declared his new technique as the rope-a-dope.

Ali would stay on top of the world for the next four years, but his performances gradually became ponderous points victories as age took its toll. Then in 1978 the inevitable happened, a cocky young olympic gold medalist won a points victory over a jaded Muhammad in Las Vegas: Leon Spinks was the new world champion... for seven months. Pride hurt and immortality within reach, the Louisville Lip raised his fight one more time to teach the young pup a solid lesson in respect and regain his title for a record third time.

Was Ali "The Greatest" as he claimed? We'll never know for sure, but he was certainly, and still is, one of the most charismatic and admired sportsmen of all time.

The contenders...

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS BOXING

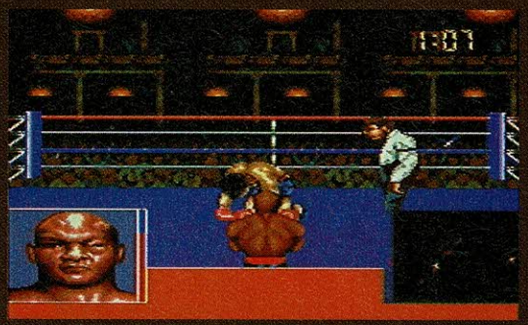
Released: 1990

Originally titled *Final Blow*, this was re-named after Douglas's world shattering knock-out of "Iron" Mike Tyson. The original appeal of this title came from the use of huge charismatic sprites and excellent crowd samples. Unfortunately, apart from the ability to knock your opponent's gumshield clean out of his mouth, the gameplay digresses into little more than a toe-to-toe slugging match and its appeal is as short-lived as its dodgy namesake's title reign.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S "REAL DEAL" BOXING

Released: 1992

Evander always was a bit of a paper champion as we proved by actually knocking him out of his own game! This was almost certainly the best boxing game available for the Mega Drive until now. The fighters are only viewed from the waist up, but they have a fairly comprehensive number of moves and the action is both fast and furious. There is a large leaderboard to climb as you take your custom-built character from pug to champion, gradually improving his stats along the way. Great sound and wonderfully gory cut eyes all help to create that punishing atmosphere of pugilism.

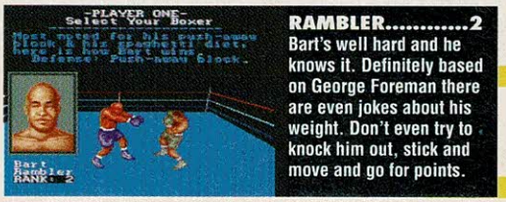


GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING

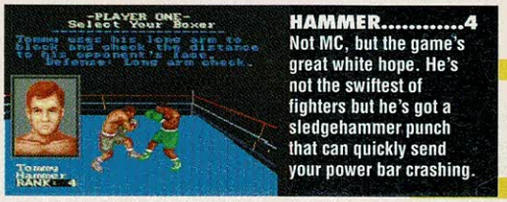
Released: 1993

Oh dear, just like George himself, this game is gutsy but very tired. It features a very interesting behind-the-fighter viewpoint but suffers painfully from a lack of coherent boxing moves. It slowly dawns on you as you dodge from side to side with your feet glued to the canvas that you have very little choice but to get pummelled by the overly powerful computer opponents. The sound is limited to grunts and thwacks, although the occasional jibes from your adversaries are quite amusing. Quite simply: unplayable.

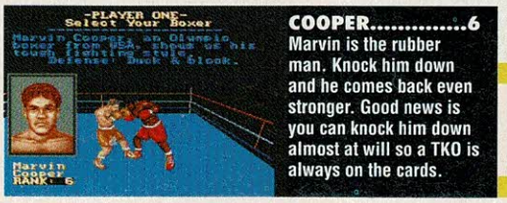
IN THE BLUE CORNER



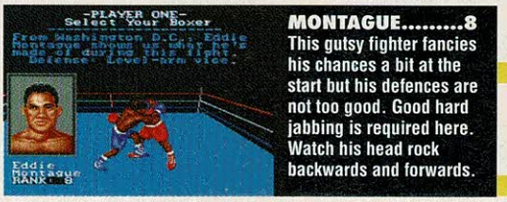
RAMBLER.....2
Bart's well hard and he knows it. Definitely based on George Foreman there are even jokes about his weight. Don't even try to knock him out, stick and move and go for points.



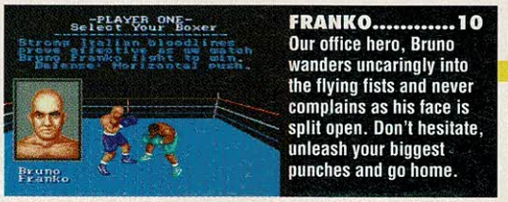
HAMMER.....4
Not MC, but the game's great white hope. He's not the swiftest of fighters but he's got a sledgehammer punch that can quickly send your power bar crashing.



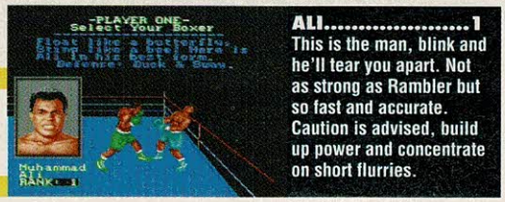
COOPER.....6
Marvin is the rubber man. Knock him down and he comes back even stronger. Good news is you can knock him down almost at will so a TKO is always on the cards.



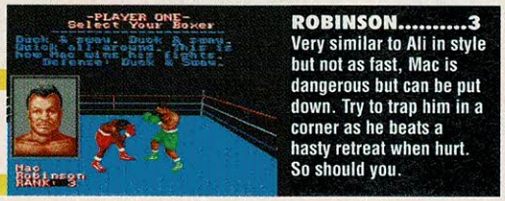
MONTAGUE.....8
This gutsy fighter fancies his chances a bit at the start but his defences are not too good. Good hard jabbing is required here. Watch his head rock backwards and forwards.



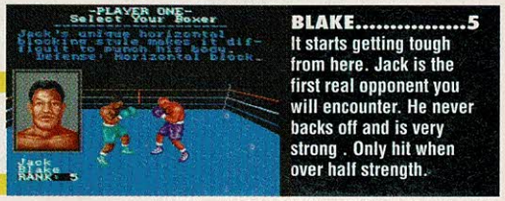
FRANKO.....10
Our office hero, Bruno wanders uncaringly into the flying fists and never complains as his face is split open. Don't hesitate, unleash your biggest punches and go home.



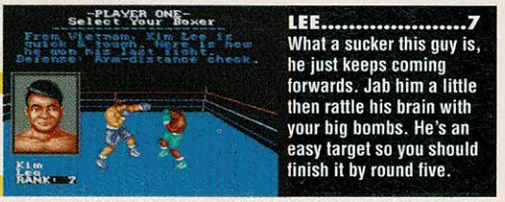
ALI.....1
This is the man, blink and he'll tear you apart. Not as strong as Rambler but so fast and accurate. Caution is advised, build up power and concentrate on short flurries.



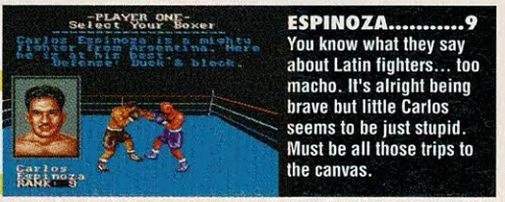
ROBINSON.....3
Very similar to Ali in style but not as fast, Mac is dangerous but can be put down. Try to trap him in a corner as he beats a hasty retreat when hurt. So should you.



BLAKE.....5
It starts getting tough from here. Jack is the first real opponent you will encounter. He never backs off and is very strong . Only hit when over half strength.



LEE.....7
What a sucker this guy is, he just keeps coming forwards. Jab him a little then rattle his brain with your big bombs. He's an easy target so you should finish it by round five.

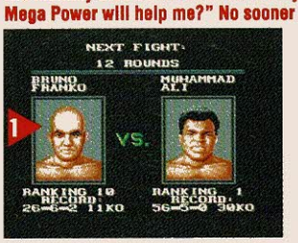


ESPINOZA.....9
You know what they say about Latin fighters... too macho. It's alright being brave but little Carlos seems to be just stupid. Must be all those trips to the canvas.

"Get over!" Bart Rambler shows no mercy as he sends the hapless figure of Carlos Espinoza crashing to the floor. The ref's even got his hand up ready to start the count. Some frantic B button pressing will be needed if he is to climb back to his feet again. "Get up, yer bum!' may be the last words poor old Carlos hears for a long time. Whoever heard of an Argentinian heavyweight, anyway? Notice the excellent perspective of the ring. This is one of the game's strongest features as it gives a real feeling of movement and momentum.

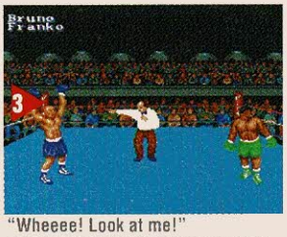
Bruno's big day out

Bruno Franko is a boxer. A very large boxer with no hair. One day Bruno had an idea. "I know," he said excitedly, "I'll challenge Muhammad Ali for the heavyweight championship of the world!"
His mummy didn't think this was a very good idea, but Bruno had made his mind up. "I wonder if those nasty boys at Mega Power will help me?" No sooner said...



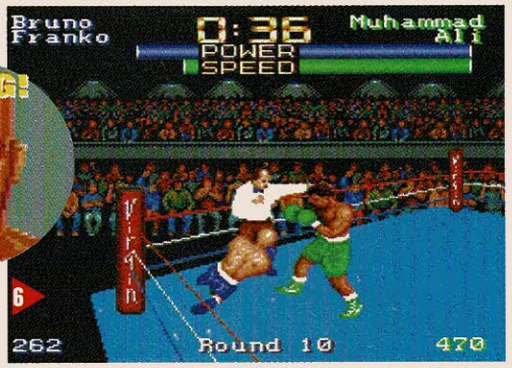
Bruno gives the cameras his best hard stare as he prepares himself for battle. "I'll win," he says confidently. What a mismatch!

The promoters have even given him a nickname, 'The Beast'. Bruno likes that. It makes him feel very important. How wonderful.

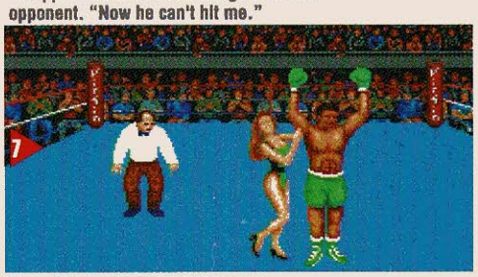


"Wheeee! Look at me!"
The referee introduces the fighters to the crowd. Lots of them cheer, but some of the ladies cry.

But despite all our worries, Bruno put up a very brave fight. Sometimes he even hit Ali back. "Stoppit!" he cries as he hangs on to his opponent. "Now he can't hit me."



It was the tenth round until Bruno finally went to sleep. All at once he felt a mighty punch on his chin and his legs stopped working. As the crowd rose to their feet, Bruno decided he would stay on the canvas for a little bit longer. At least until everyone had gone home.



"I am the greatest!" proclaims Ali. "I'll be back!" sniffs Bruno as he is wheeled away with lots of strange wires attatched to him. "It's been a lovely day."

Poor old Bruno will be away for a long, long time now but one thing is for sure, Ali didn't get it all his own way. Take a look at the picture to the right. Good old Bruno, he can be a national hero and do pantomime in Southbourne now. See, I told you boxing hurts.

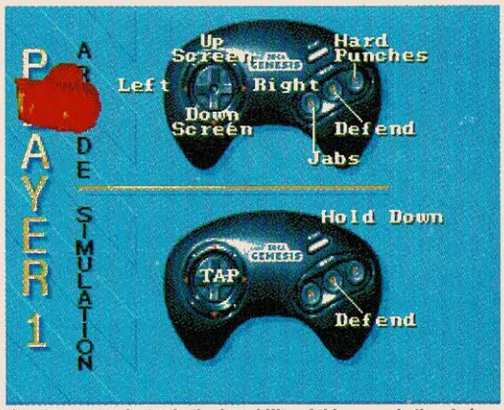
At the end of every fight you are shown a detailed score card, complete with knock-downs, punches thrown and even judges' decisions. This is the card for a fight between Ali and Marvin Cooper. I'm not a boxing expert but seeing as Ali was knocked down seven times and the total rounds scored are equal, doesn't it seem strange that Cooper lost?

I saw Evander Holyfield last year and thought nothing would top it on the Mega Drive – needless to say, something did! Ali shoots right to the top of the world rankings in my book. The intro is stunning, combining innovative 3-D graphics zooming around the venue with clear samples from Ali and the house announcer. Along with the pounding tune and ruthless boxer and crowd effects in the game, this is a real aural feast.

One thing that really bugs me about most games is a lack of options, but you can't say that about Ali. The amount of customisation possible (sadly missing a souped-up boxer) means anyone can pick up the game and enter it at any level (especially if you remember the passwords). I especially liked switching between arcade and simulator mode.

Ultimately, all this makes for a great fighting atmosphere. The boxing is bloody, the graphics gruesome and the sound squelching: what more do you need from a boxing game?

DOM



Another strong factor in the lastability of this game is the choice you are given between using the arcade and simulation modes of control. Simulation is definitely the way to play the game as you have total control of your fighter. However, this mode is very tricky to master and will probably be something that most players will get to after they have fully got the hang of the game in arcade mode.

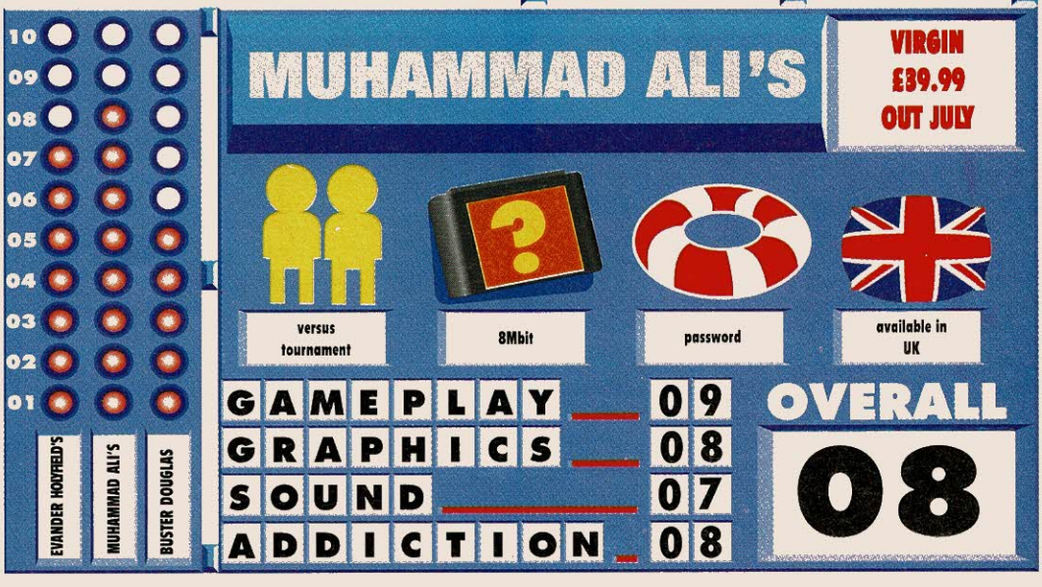
Ali suffers from one main problem: it is too tedious. Everything else about the game is top-notch, though. The presentation sets a convincing atmosphere – even down to wolf whistles when the girl with the round card struts her stuff – and Ali's persona is built up with the notorious Ali shuffles and big swings.

Visually, there's nothing here that hasn't been seen in other boxing games, although the battered faces are quite satisfying. Sound is much better though, with the crowd constantly voicing their opinion of the fight with various cheers, criticism and, ultimately, booing for boring fights.

Boxing games are limited at the best of times (especially without a custom fighter option), and within the constraints of the genre, Ali is, no doubt, the champ. But boxing games in general are about as much fun as going ten rounds with Lennox Lewis.

STEVE

INSTANT ACCESS



REVIEW

He's past one, he's past two. He'd better hope I don't catch up with him, that's for sure. The dribbling on *J League* is pretty tricky as you have no sudden burst of speed and defenders running without the ball are likely to catch you up if you're not very careful. So look up, move into space...

Probably the first unnerving thing you notice about this game is that you control the goalies as well as the outfield players. This can be very handy for claiming loose balls or running out to narrow the angle on marauding forwards, but it can also be bloody annoying when you suddenly gain control and dive the wrong way.

J. LEAGUE PRO striker

Saturday afternoons in the rain, plastic cups of Bovril and the resounding chorus of "Here we go, here we go," seem a long way from the land of saki and sumo. What would Bruce Lee make of Vinnie Jones? What will Gary Lineker make of sushi at half-time? Dribbling Dave Perry gets in where the studs are flying to bring you the hottest cart to arrive from the Orient (not Leyton) in a long time.

I love football. I've always loved football. I still remember when my home team, Torquay United, could win games and England were a footballing nation to be reckoned with. I even remember when Manchester United *weren't* on ITV three nights a week because there were so many other good sides to choose from. All this seems a long time ago now as English matches degenerate into dull and lengthy trench wars, fought out by players not fit to scrub the mud off Kevin Keegan's perm. Very ordinary players receive king's ransoms for spending most of the season in physiotherapy. As a result, the trend has been for football purists to look abroad for real entertainment. To the glitzy but over-rated Italian Serie A, to the technical excellence of the Bundesleaguer and to the nimble footwork of the Japanese J League... hang on, the J League?!

Are things really so bad that even the Japanese, a nation that would have trouble winning a five-a-side tournament at my local pub, are more interesting than our own stars? I fear so, and what's more they've now got the best football game ever on the Mega Drive as well.

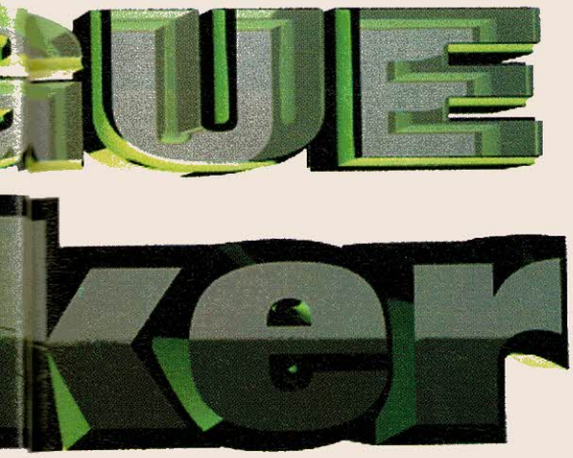
The Japanese have certainly gone soccer crazy. We're about three months into their first ever professional season and already they're pushing to host World Cup 2002. Like everything else in Japan, football is big business and they do mean business. Signing big name players like Gary Lineker of England, Zico of Brazil and Aaron Winter of Holland ensures that their league at least holds some air of credibility and quality, and although it seems harder to swallow than a spicy prawn ball, they probably already have their eyes on some of the world's most coveted silverware.

It seems that new football games come and go faster than managers at Chelsea. Unfortunately, they are nearly always measured by the legendary *Super Kick Off* and dismissed instantly as second or even third division in comparison. *J League Pro Striker* has kicked all that into touch; this is the first football game to really ignite a competitive spark within our offices. Slowly, four-player challenges have crept into our regular lunch-time routines and the cart has started disappearing in the evenings – and we knew, despite the whole thing being in Japanese, we had found one helluva game.

Everything about the game oozes quality; the passing, the shooting, the overall control of the players.

Played using a view from the stand behind the goal, the action seems slow next to many other footy titles, but after a couple of nail-biting matches you realise that it's because this is more of a football simulation than a football game. Your players don't charge around at 100mph, they don't hit the ball from 50 yards out with the pace of a cruise missile. What they do do is send beautifully flighted passes upfield, create space, head crosses and perform twisting vollies that would make Mark Hughes green with envy. The whole effect is absorbing and more conducive to careful planning and skilful playmaking than lightning reactions and blind luck. Play it alone, play it with your mates, but definitely play it.

Oh dear, things get a little scrappy as two players throw themselves headlong at the ball... and miss. You can be sure that the crowd will be jeering them for this. They seem to be a very unforgiving lot these Japanese supporters.



There are drawbacks with J League, tons of them – like the absence of an action replay, the way the game resets to one-player after every match, the Jap text, the odd crash, the epileptic ref – but I'm quite content to put up with all this just to have the totally awesome gameplay contained in J League.

It's quite disconcerting how Japan has taken other western sports like golf and baseball, and made them incredibly successful, and now wants to take on the footballing world. But if it means we get to play great games like this, sod world football, I say, hello and welcome to Japanese football.

Where J League scores over every other soccer game that I know of – including Kick Off! – is that it's totally realistic. Everything moves in realtime; it takes just the right amount of time to get down the pitch, the ball flies around at the correct speed, and injuries, fouls and penalty cards are handed out at the right time. This makes it unquestionably more fun to play than any other sports game because Sega Japan have managed get exactly the right mix between strategy, skill and arcade reactions. Nothing more to say really, it could be the closest a football game comes to perfection.

DOM

OVERALL

09

2.

ARE YOU BLIND, REF?

They like a good moan in *J League* and it's fun watching your players' gamesmanship as they give the ref a hard time.

"Uuh! What for ref?" Shrugging at the ref has never yet resulted in turning over a booking decision. Still it's worth a go.

"My ball!" If there is any chance of a throw-in decision looking dodgy, both sets of players instantly appeal.

"Get up, you poof!" Players roll around in agony when fouled, sometimes clutching their knees in pain. Kick 'em again, I say.

This is the point in the game where you put all those long considered footballing theories into practice. An excellent display allows you to choose from six very different playing formations. It also shows you exactly where your players will be located on the pitch. It's worth practising with each to see which best suits your style of play – don't make a Graham Taylor of it.

3 Top	For those who like a central striker. Okay, but leaves a gap in the middle of the park.
2 Top	This is your classic give-nothing-away formation. Cautious but effective.
Sweeper	As your sweeper tends to play in front of the back-four, this is not as safe as it seems.
S-American	Leaves you very bare at the back with most of your players out on the wings.
B-Leaguer	Very attacking with one controlling central defender. Beware of counter attacks.

EXPLAIN THAT AGAIN, BOSS?

Some lesser mags have shied away from *J League* due to its very intensive use of Japanese text. However, that doesn't make it any less a game, and so for those of you who may be struggling, let me explain...

A This is the Start Game command, select it and you will get this screen. The first choice is just to set up a normal game. The second is to play either as or against the All-star team.

B This option allows you to compete in the Sega Cup. You can choose to play in either a four- or eight- team tournament.

C This gives you a chance to take on all-comers in the J League. The league takes quite a while to play out so you will be glad of the save game option.

D Yes, you've guessed it, this is the options screen. This should be the first screen you go into to set up your match conditions and choose your control method. All fairly straight forward stuff, this.

These are the teams you can choose from. Most of them seem fairly obscure apart from Gary Lineker's Grampus Eight – but they're not very good.

This is the fiddly bit where you decide who is player one and who is player two. It seems to have a mind of its own and the computer can end up with your team. Note the four players.

This is the most important screen to get to grips with. It's here that you will decide upon your side, make substitutions and switch players' positions around.

E Selecting this simply throws you straight into the game so stay away from it until you are content with your line-up.

Press B and you can move along to this option. Pressing C here will allow you to flit over your players. Press C again and you will get a statistics summary for each footballer.

G Press B again and you can access this option which allows you to move your players around for either tactical reasons, because of injury or to substitute them if they have acquired a yellow card. As before, you use the C button to get onto the team list and then again to activate a selection. Move the cursor over the player you want to switch your selection with and press C. Easy.

Club call...

SUPER KICK OFF

Released: May 1993

Anco's *Kick Off* series has ruled the soccer genre for many years almost unchallenged. Its revolutionary overhead perspective, its free-rolling ball, the full-size pitch, all added to the feel of really playing soccer rather than playing a game. On the Amiga it really did rule supreme, then when US Gold converted it to the Game Gear it was just bearable, and on the Mega Drive it is sadly awkward and largely unplayable to the point of being boring. Only soccer-starved console fans would want to buy this.

EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

Released: June 1992

Originally *Manchester United Europe* before being converted to the console, this limited football title flatters to deceive. It all looks very nice but as you are oohing and aahing at the realistic graphics, it is all too easy to overlook the fact that this really is an unrealistic toe-stuck-to-ball plodder of a game. More Sunday league than Serie A, this would only provide a momentary distraction for the majority of footy fans. It topped the charts when released, but only because there was nothing else around.

I'd love to sit here and slag off J League, but I can't. For once I agree with everything Dave has said. The game is fabulous, amazing, stupendous... hold on, put down the thesaurus. The sprites are detailed and the movements are totally realistic. The game isn't played at a hair-raising speed like Super Kick Off, but the pace at which it's played enhances the realism. The Japanese text is the only problem, but the more you play, the more you work out.

Everything about the game oozes quality; the passing, the shooting, the overall control of the players. Every free moment we have is occupied by the football frenzy, even to the point of setting up our own office league. Anyway, buy it, it's worth every penny. I must go, I've got a league match which I need to win!

STEVE

FOUR WAY! HOWAY! HOWAY! HOWAY!

This strange-looking gizmo is in fact the much celebrated Sega Four-way Tap. Not available in this country until the autumn, the adaptor will set you back about £21.99 at the moment from most importers. However, it really is a worthwile investment with so many games now being programmed to utilise it. Although there is no definitive release date as yet, it seems certain that it will be available officially to coincide with the arrival of *Ultimate Soccer* on the Mega Drive which allows you to play with up to eight players at once (linking up adaptors)! *Gauntlet IV* will also allow you to use the Tap, as will another sporting title which we can't yet disclose. This is certainly the most sociable addition to the console for a long time.

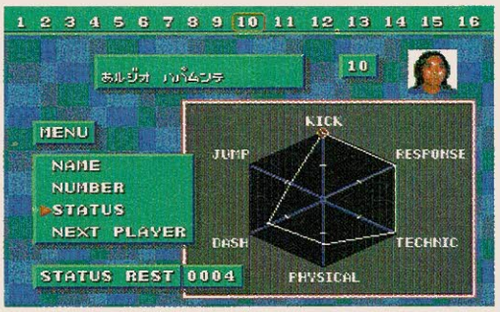
Goal! As the keeper dives too late, the ball is already on its way into the back of the net. With a bit of practice, it is easy to score some very spectacular goals. The choice of short passes, long balls and close range shots allow the experienced player to perfect an arsenal (no pun intended) of deadly strikes from most positions on the pitch. The ability to use after-touch also ensures that no shot can be treated as harmless. Many a keeper has fallen foul of a bit of wicked spin.

Young man, this cart certainly gives it 100%. J League definitely sends all previous football games in for an early bath. This is the only game that could have made me put down NHLPA Hockey for so long. I am now totally dedicated to scoring diving headers, bicycle kicks and edge-of-the-box curlers in my lunch hour. I only wish there was an action replay feature so I could relive my golden goals again and again. What can I say, I love it. It's Maradona and Pele combined, it's Liverpool 1974, it's Brazil 1970, it's a match winner in extra time!

This is without a doubt the most complete footballing package I have ever come across on console. The four-way tap is an essential added purchase so that all your mates can join in as well, and although this makes the overall price a little high it is worth saving up for, believe me, because then you can forget about the rubbish on Match of the Day and get into some seriously classic action.

DAVE

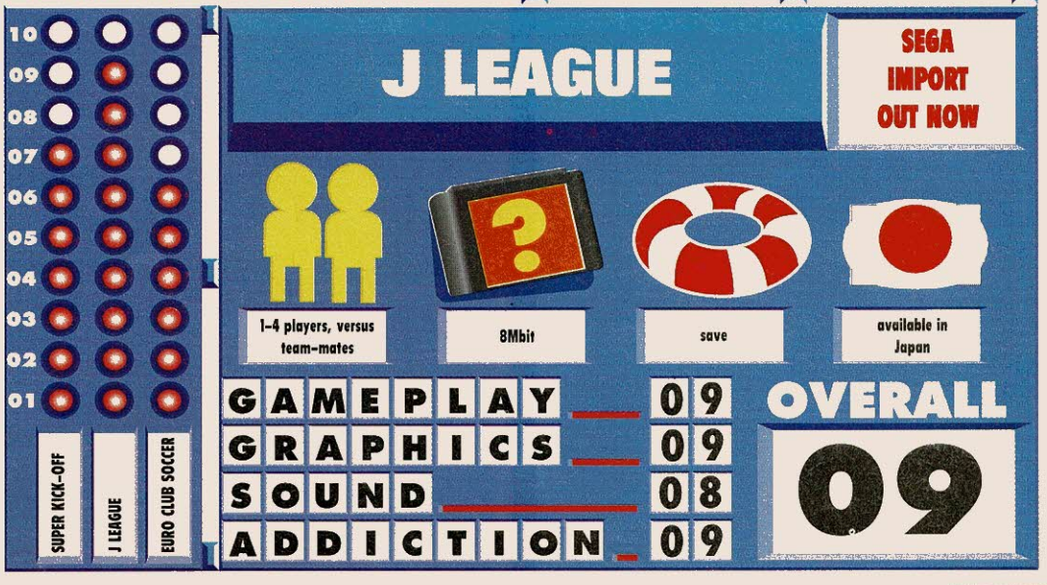
Oh you flashy git! A well-timed press of the A or B button can result in some beautiful pieces of athleticism from your players. Twisting volleys, scissor kicks and diving headers are all really easy to pull off and can provide a really impressive finish to any attacking movement; they can also save your life when you are defending frantically. However, if you attempt a move like the one above and it falls to come off then the crowd will jeer and laugh at you. Quite right too, safety should be the first rule of successful football.



If you select your player's statistics in the All-star team option, you will find this rather bewildering screen. It allows you to choose all your team's names, numbers and even their statistics. You can set up the team to suit your style of play. They could have really good shots or be able to jump extra high. Your wingers might benefit from improved speed and your midfielders from better passing. It's not all roses though, because as you boost one statistic you have to lose some points from another, so careful consideration of position and formation are needed here. Also, you try naming your players in Japanese. The best solution is to just use a take-away menu and hope no-one notices. If only you could change his haircut...

As with any football game in which you cannot see the whole pitch, proficient use of the full-pitch scanner display is essential if you are going to know where the rest of your players are. This is accessed in *J League* by pressing START to pause the game and then moving the pad LEFT or RIGHT to filter through the mish-mash of Japanese text. Some of it will have a large L, M or S. Surprisingly enough, these are the scanner settings Large, Medium or Small so you can set it up just as you like it. Of course, you don't have to use a scanner at all but that would mean relying heavily upon a lot of luck coming your way.

INSTANT ACCESS

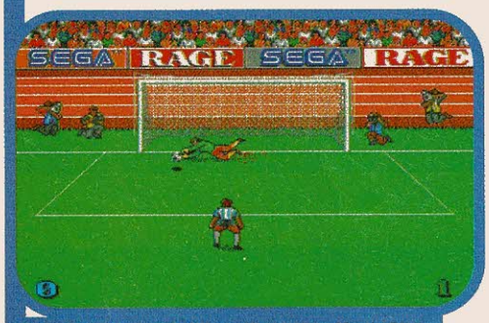


REVIEW

The ball's in the back of the net, and the crowd are going wild. Scoring goals in *Ulimate Soccer* is all about passing and judging your angles. It's just like real football, the main difference being the speed and that you can't do the ludicrous curls in the real thing. The little triangular play symbol at the bottom of the screen indicates the action replay mode is about to kick in automatically. Just press START and you'll get out of reliving your glorious accomplishment and back to real life.

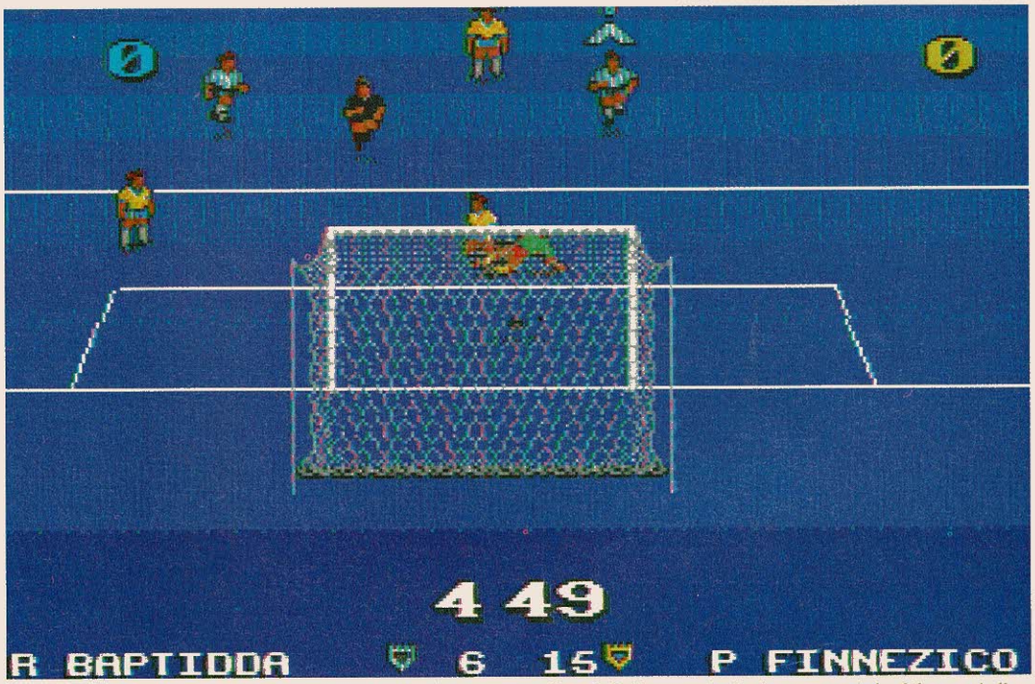
ULTIMATE SHOOT OUT

It's gone to penalties. Neither player could break the defence in extra-time, so it's all down to this. This is where the strikers' nerves set in. Oh no, what a save!



The whole stadium is filled with tension. Martin Platt runs up to the ball, hits it to the left on the floor, and the keeper's saved it. Oh my word, what a disaster!

With the opposition two goals up, they must score here. The keeper seems to be making the best saves of his life. They think it's all over... it is now!



Switching options to the six-a-side format, you are taken indoors onto a blue pitch. You can play for the same periods of time, and all the options remain the same. The ball does not go out of touch as it does on grass, but rebounds off the wall and keeps the play going at break-neck speed. You get the impression that the indoor matches are quicker, but this is just because the pitch is smaller. Of course, you can speed the game up if you so desire, but believe me it's fast enough at its preset speed. *Ultimate Soccer* is just jam-packed with options to alter the play: some are useful, some are pointless, but at least you aren't limited to playing conventional games all the time; the indoor game is a clever addition.

After all the hype surrounding it, I really am so disappointed with Ultimate Soccer. At first I was very hopeful. The title screens were very easy to use and there were even little bits of animated humour speckled about – but that was where the fun stopped.

This really is a horrible football game. The sprites are tiny with absolutely no appeal. They race around at 100mph with the ball stuck to their feet as the screen flickers away desperately trying to update. There's little point learning what the different buttons do as there is no real difference in any of the kicks. Anyway, it's pointless passing as your players can run from one end of the pitch to the other in about two seconds flat. If you waste your money on this game, you really will be the laughing stock of your mates. Oh, it utilises the four-way tap and you can play with up to eight players. Big deal! Spend £2.50 on a Woolies football and go down the park with your friends instead.

DAVE

Gameplay is based on pure luck, because the action's so fast that you never really know what's going on.

Here you see the stats screen for a friendly match between Argentina and the lucky Swedes. To the right of the kit are the strength bars, these indicate the power, passing and fitness of the teams. I don't fancy Sweden's chances...

Press START during the game and this will pop up. Here you can alter your team's abilities, by means of substitutions, change of formations or anything else you can do to make sure you win! Equalise Teams? No, we'd never use that option ever.

OVERALL

05

The football season's over, and apart from hoping that England qualify for the World Cup, what else have we to look forward to? Former England and Liverpool right-winger, Steve Bough, returns from an off-season break in Benidorm to bring you this report...

Liverpool is arguably Britain's home of great football. Just look at the teams within a 50 mile radius; you have Liverpool FC, of course, then there's Everton, and Manchester City and Man United just down the road. It was from within this hub of English football that *Ultimate Soccer* was conceived. The programmers commissioned by Sega, Rage Software, are based in sunny Bootle at the heart of Scouseland. Captain of the side, Paul Finnegan, was instrumental in bringing his favourite sport to the Sega screens (as well as a few Nintendo ones under the moniker *Striker*!).

But Rage have seen soccer titles come and go (they have, in one form or another, been in this business since Clive came up with the Spectrum), so when they approached *Ultimate Soccer*, they wanted to produce something completely different. Until *J League*, which is after all only available on import, Sega owners had little decent to choose from: it was *Kick Off* or nothing. So by creating even a half decent game, Rage are bound to have a winner on their hands (especially with the marketing machine of Sega behind it).

At the heart of *Ultimate Soccer*'s originality is its speed. If you thought *Kick Off* was fast, you ain't seen nothing yet. This game will literally frizzle your eyeballs as they try to keep up with the play. Then there's the perspective. Not content with the Mega Drive's usual abilities,. Rage have designed a game that, with the help of some very whizzy software, tries to mirror the SNES's hardware-controlled Mode 7. The result is something you will definitely never have seen on the Mega Drive before.

Ultimately, er, I mean finally, there's the added attraction of eight players. Yes, you heard right, Rage weren't happy with just the normal four you can get from Sega's new adapter, they have rigged up the software so that it can sense if there are TWO Sega four-plays attached. Now that is definitely a first for a footy game on ANY format.

But the great thing about *Ultimate Soccer* is that you can play any team with any formation anywhere in the world – without The Sun trying to get you sacked. Now even Graham Taylor doesn't get that sort of treatment...

ultimate soccer

Options? You want 'em, you got 'em. You can play the game you want, the way you want. Just like Burger King...

1. This option lets you choose the pitch condition. Select between dry, wet, damp or normal.
2. If you think that your game isn't windy enough, increase, decrease or change the whole direction.
3. Ball control allows you to choose how close you want the ball. Ranges from tight, loose or push.
4. You can either play a normal 11-a-side, or revert to six-a-side indoor. Both are knackering on the eyes.
5. This option allows you to change the speed of the game from slow, normal or fast.
6. Defines how strong the computer team will be against you. Varies from easy, normal or hard.
7. The controversial backpass rule. In *Ultimate Soccer* you can switch it off and stick two fingers up to FIFA.
8. Inertia, which means when your players are running at full tilt, they won't just stop if you change direction.
9. At the end of extra time you'll find that it will go to penalties – or perhaps not, if you don't want them.
10. The action replay can either kick in automatically or manually after a goal has been scored.
11. This determines the weight of the ball. Choose between light, heavy or normal.
12. From here you can choose the length of the match, and whether you require extra time.
13. If you can't stand the music, turn it off. Oh, how considerate. Thanks very much, Rage.
14. Yep, you can get rid of the sound effects too, if you find them mildly annoying.
15. If you're not happy with the view of the pitch you can change between normal or deep. Neat!
16. When you get a corner, goal, great save, etc the computer flashes it onscreen – but it doesn't have to...

"Get him off!" Well, you heard the manager, it's time to pull off this donkey. "Now introduce that young man I signed last week to the play... Nigel!"

Here we see how a free-kick should be taken. Gazza get your notebook and learn something. The good thing about free-kicks is the amount of curl you can get on the ball.

Being a huge fan of J League, I thought I'd never find anything in the same class. But credit where credit's due, Ultimate Soccer is one great game. The sprites move with delicious fluidity, and the actual gameplay is plenty tough enough to challenge even the most ardent sports players. The options are vast, it's like being in a sweet shop with only 30p to spend. You can choose the exact game to suit you, or alternatively make it difficult on yourself.

The eight-player mode is out of this world, adding a whole new dimension to tournaments with friends. I just loved the sheer speed and manic action of flying all over the pitch, shooting from every angle. Ultimate Soccer isn't the sort of game that grows on you: you either love it or hate it. I loved it, and I don't mind putting my head on the chopping block and saying that I bet thousands of other Mega Drive players will find it as equally appealing.

STEVE

What an incredibly grim game! I'm not joking when I say that at first look I thought this was a Master System title. In fact, it would have been quite a decent 8-bit game, but to try and flog this as a full 16-bit soccer extravaganza is a joke. Only Kick Off has worse graphics that this – but its are intentional. The players are small, jerky and totally inaccurate. Gameplay is based on pure luck, because the action's so fast that you never really know what's going on. This is a sad case of a popular SNES game (Striker) that just doesn't work on the Mega Drive. The attempt to imitate Mode 7 graphics is laudable, but if the Mega Drive can't keep up, then why embarrass it? It's sad that in the same month as J League, we have to endure this sort of exploitative rubbish. Avoid the official game, get J League on import instead.

Oh, and about the eight-player option: is it physically possibly to have eight players (with eight joypads, two Sega taps and eight chairs) in front of the Mega Drive at the same time, and see the screen?

DOM

INSTANT ACCESS

10 09 08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01

J.LEAGUE | ULTIMATE SOCCER | TECMO WORLD CUP

ULTIMATE SOCCER

SEGA
£39.99
OUT SEPT

1-8 players with Sega tap

8Mbit

no save option

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	05
GRAPHICS	04
SOUND	05
ADDICTION	06

OVERALL

05

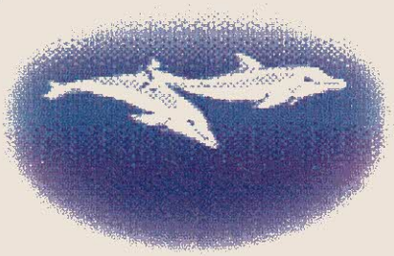
When he's not spotting dolphins off the Cornish coast, our resident oceanic expert also likes to swim with sharks. Luckily for MEGA POWER, we managed to rescue Steve Bough from the jaws of a Great White just in time for the exclusive review of Ecco on CD.

Ecco

REVIEW

In the decade of awareness and spiritual uprising, the human race has become more attentive to the damage we are causing. Sega, always ones to capitalise on current trends, saw the potential for an ecologically sound game. They subsequently brought us the delightfully ambient Ecco, a game that is so chilled out, you'll constantly have to pinch yourself to realise you're not dreaming.

Sega of America got so ecologically involved that they even sponsored their own dolphin. With the emphasis on caring for the planet and all that flowery stuff, Sega wanted to show the world that they were as aware as the next person of global concern. Confirming the theory that dolphins are as equally intelligent as some humans, Ecco has capitalised on his new found fame.



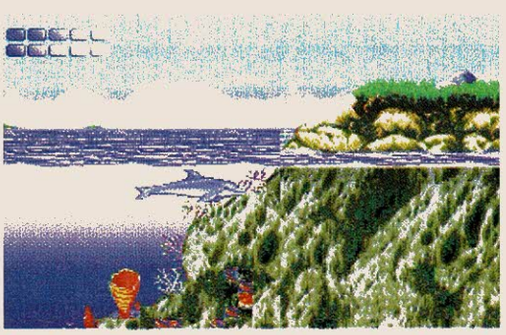
Ecco, when released on the Mega Drive last Christmas-time, was pronounced one hell of a game. Well I've got some good news: Ecco on CD is even bigger! Instead of the 25 Mega Drive levels there are now over 30. In addition to this, the game plays a lot quicker, probably because the Mega Drive doesn't have to worry about the music. The CD's soundtrack is digitally processed in Q sound to give the impression of surround sound through just two speakers.

If you've seen Ecco on the Mega Drive (if not, where have you been?), you'll know that the game is one of the most original that Sega have produced. It's not that it's just beautiful to look at, it develops a whole new genre of game. It can't be pigeon-holed into categories like platform, beat-'em-up or arcade adventure. The closest it gets is to a puzzle game, with the environment being the underlying theme.

Developed in America, the production team carried out extensive research during the making of this game. Dolphin behaviour was studied closely, as was research into their communication skills, some of which are as advanced as human communication. The Mega Drive game opened up new avenues in gameplay, and should give the CD a long-awaited playable game that also uses the CD's capacity.

Ecco soon reveals itself as the mammoth adventure it purports to be

Here's a prime example of the dangers you'll have to face. These sharks, contrary to popular belief, won't tear you apart but they'll cause a serious dent in your energy. Charging them won't achieve anything, swim carefully around them.



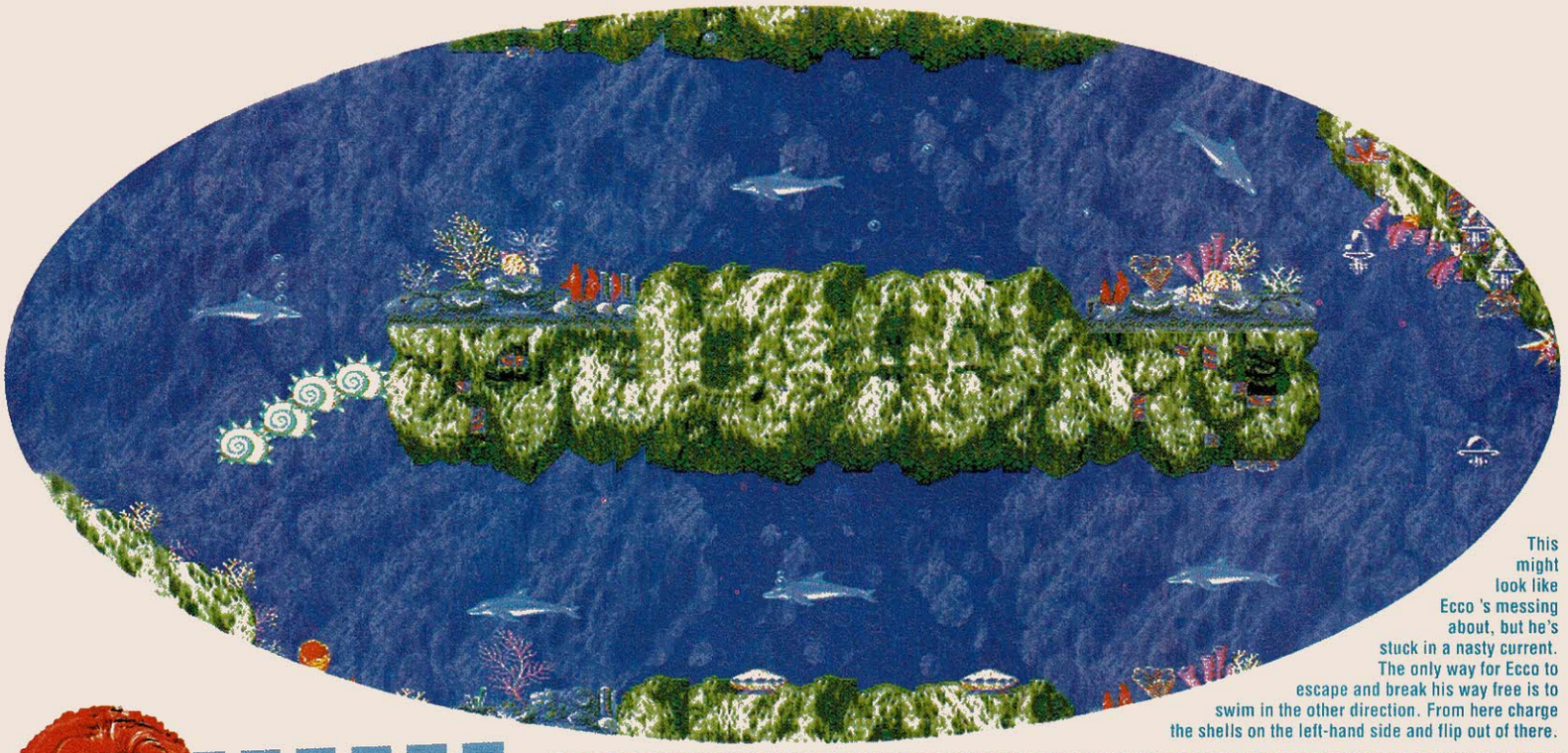
Ecco's faced with a bit of a problem: there's nowhere to go under the water so it's time for one of those special dolphin jumps. This is often the case when your passage underwater is obstructed; the only way to go is over the top.

Back flip...

ECCO

Released: January 1993

Officially released just after last Christmas, *Ecco* took the console world by storm. Even managing to knock the legendary *Sonic 2* off its number one spot. It was lauded as an innovative concept – yes, puzzle games had been done before but not to the extent and depth of *Ecco.* With its massive 25 levels, gamesplayers realised that here was a game worth every penny. The 8Mbit cartridge was fully exploited, and even allowed password selection. Clues were given to solving the ocean's and Ecco's problems, but players loved the fact that the environmental message wasn't shoved in their face. *Ecco* on Mega Drive soon shot to classic cart status, even having a special limited edition pack produced for it.



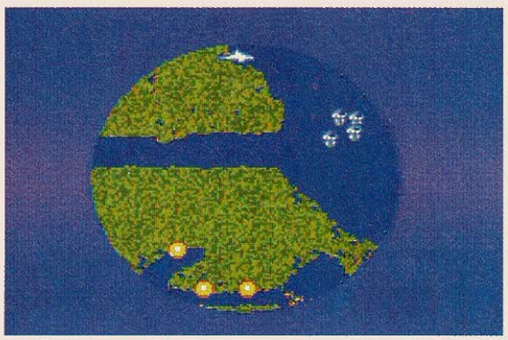
This might look like Ecco 's messing about, but he's stuck in a nasty current. The only way for Ecco to escape and break his way free is to swim in the other direction. From here charge the shells on the left-hand side and flip out of there.

Having frolicked with a few in my wetsuit, I'm a bit of a dolphin fan, but Sega would have to go some to top the cart version of Ecco. With this version, though, they have done it, and fully utilised the CD to boot. I was blown away by the Q sound music. Because the game is so alluring, the soundtrack gives it the edge of something that escapes into another realm of happiness. Perfect for the ultimate relaxation, it's one of those games where you flick on the lava-lamp, switch off the lights and chill!

The glorious animation of Ecco and his sea-faring friends is just like one of those old Jacques Cousteau films. Drifting into the game – which you'll find yourself doing – the likeness to actual film quality is outstanding, bringing visions of The Big Blue to mind. The gameplay is highly challenging: sometimes you'll be sat for ages trying to work out what to do next. The satisfaction when you've solved it pays huge dividends. I can't fail to see why someone could not be attracted to a game of this quality. If you're thinking of buying a Mega-CD, but were a bit peeved about the games, take a look at Ecco, you'll flip out (sorry)!

STEVE

Sweet harmony. To see dolphins and killer whales in the wild is a delightful sight – seeing as dolphins are a source of food for the hungry whale. Ecco has taken it upon himself to have a conversation with this whale. The whale offers advice about Ecco's further travels. Take his advice as it's the route to follow. The glyph shown here will give you the sonar key to pass another one on the level. Once you have spoken to the killer whale go back left, check the map and then swim down to the right, find the other glyph, and search for your pod.



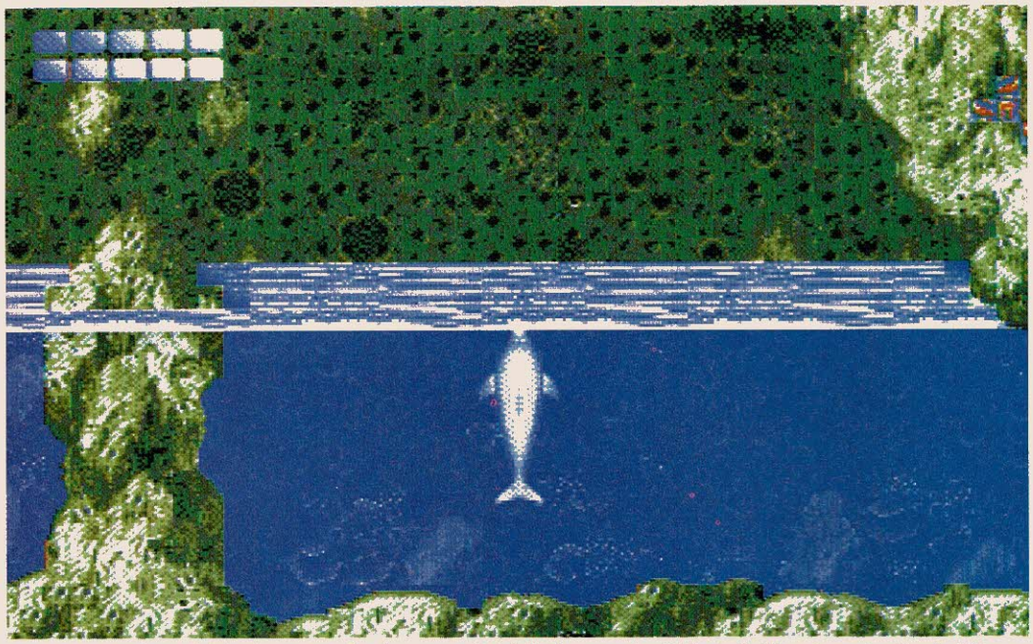
This map shows Ecco at the top. The orange circles at the bottom indicate prowling enemies and dangerous objects. If the map shows orange blocks this will indicate barriers and moveable rocks or shells. Bubbles when shown on the map will locate healing clams and air pockets. The map is continuously used in Ecco: hold down the sonar button, and the waves will scan the level and send the map back to you.

Ecco... ecco... ecco...

Funny that. An echo, in the not so Nineties spelling of the word, is a sonic repetition of a previously uttered word or noise. Ecco, in the Sega (home of Sonic, remember), and far more ecologically-sound sense of the word, is a direct copy of a Mega Drive game that we were all bombarded with only a few months ago. This, admittedly, should not affect the fact that it is an excellent game – if you like endless maze-solving and very little excitement, that is.

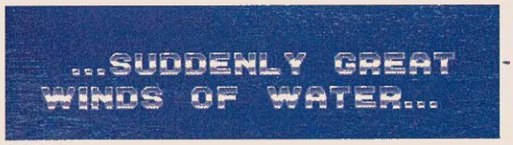
CD owners, however, cannot be so picky. With very little choice out there, this is probably a more-than-tempting morsel for quality-starved gamers. It is slick, pleasing on the eye and sooo tranquil. The sploshy sea effects and ebbing soundtrack help spread the feeling that this is a New Age product, a mellow game where no-one really dies and strength and perseverance will win through in the end. Unfortunately, it also makes it very clear that there is little more excitement provided here than by a Rubik's cube on a wet Sunday. The novelty of frolicking in the sea with all those lovely peaceful creatures soon wears thin and I found myself starting to long for a reason to pump that fire button.

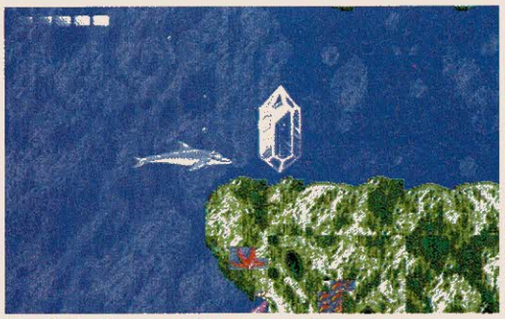
DAVE



The indicators in the top left-hand corner are Ecco's energy and air left. The energy bar (at the top) will go down when Ecco is hit by any prowling sea creatures. Ecco's air will slowly go down when he's in water, and only replenished wihen he find an air pocket or returns to the surface. As you proceed through the game these air pockets become more and more difficult to find, sometimes with only two to a level. Swim faster, Ecco!

This is a tricky little puzzle if you don't know what to do. The cone shell (at the bottom) is the object you'll need to move these rocks. Initially, the shell will be located above. Swim up to it and nudge it downward with your snout. The trick is to flick it, the shell will then float down and in the process will take out all the rocks. The trouble with this manoeuvre is that you probably won't do it at the first attempt. Keep at it and, as with all of this game, be patient, take it easy and you'll be able to solve it.





This glyph will give you information (as shown above). Scattered all over this game are glyphs, they are crystals as old as the ocean itself. Some glyphs give you messages, others impart new songs and others just obstruct your route.

OVERALL 09

Dolphins are, without doubt, the most affectionate, loveable animals in the world. No other animal stirs such emotions in humans. Because of this, Ecco the Dolphin could have really backfired on Sega, but as the Mega Drive version proved, they used the dolphin to produce a real classic. I must confess to never playing the Mega Drive version – it just slipped through my net, you might say – but the CD version confirms what I originally thought, that Ecco is one of the most addictive and totally original games on any machine.

Be warned, though, that Ecco is not the sort of game that you get used to after a few minutes' play. I had to go through almost one hour of painstaking jumping and frustrating bumping before I really started to get into Ecco. But it was definitely worth it, as the game soon revealed itself as the mammoth adventure it purports to be.

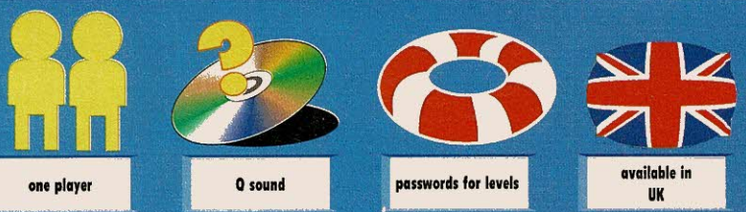
The CD is definitely used to its full potential for this sort of the game: 1) it's really massive, 2) the music is amazing. If anyone can think of anything else that could be added to the CD version, I'd been interested to see it. Ecco is undoubtedly the greatest CD game so far, and anyone who says anything to the contrary doesn't know what they're talking about!

DOM

INSTANT ACCESS

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

SEGA
£44.99
OUT AUGUST



GAMEPLAY	08
GRAPHICS	08
SOUND	09
ADDICTION	09

OVERALL 09

10 09 08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01

ECCO MD | ECCO CD | JAMES POND

POWER challeng

THE CHAMP

Name: .....Dave "The Kid" Perry
Representing: .....MEGA POWER
Position: .....Designer
Age: .....a young-looking 27
Favourite MD game: ....*NHLPA Hockey*
Most favoured game in challenge:
.....*NHLPA Hockey*
Special abilities:
magic bandana. Like Sampson, it gives The Kid his remarkable strength.

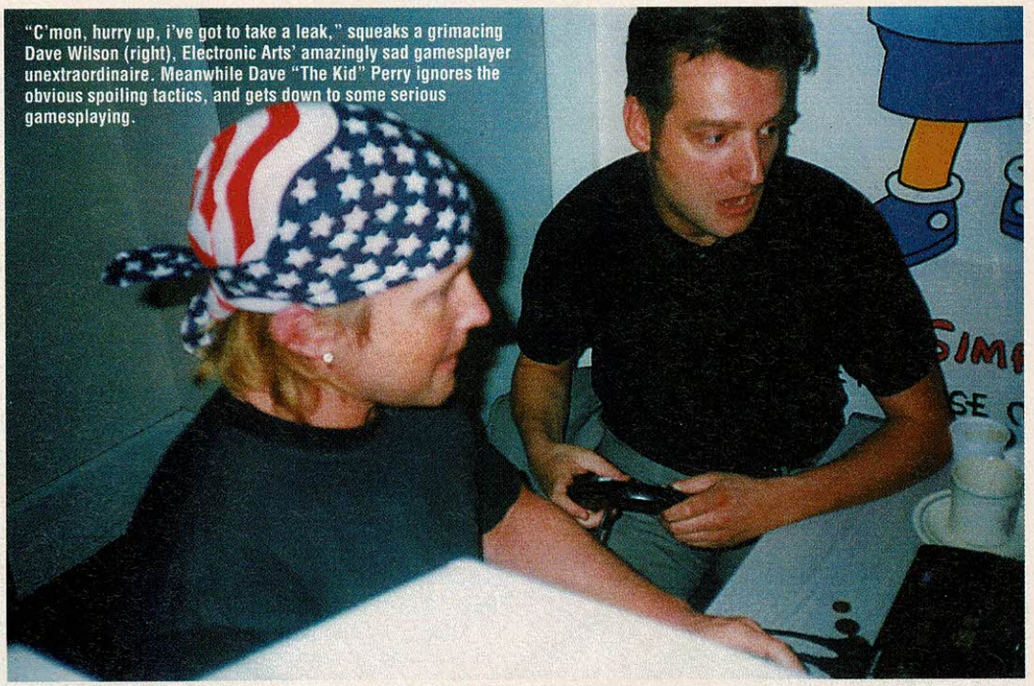
Recently crowned Sky's Games World magazine champ, dazzling Dave Perry has been justifying the title ever since. The PR people – the folks that show us the games for review – just couldn't believe that a mere designer (albeit the industry's finest) could cut the mustard. It's true, and in the interests of fair play, The Kid (as Dave's mum calls him) has invited any PR bod to come down and play him. An intriguing challenge is in store. Can the folks promoting the games actually play them? Dominic Handy scribbled furiously as the fists flew.

RULES

Three games produced by the software house the guest is representing.
One game to be chosen by the challenger.
One game to be chosen by The Kid.
One game as yet unseen by both players.
Each player is informed of the other's game one week prior to the contest.
Each game is played until one player has won two contests.

CHALLENGER

Name: .....Dave "Michael" Wilson
Representing: .....Electronic Arts
Position: .....PR Manager
Age: 30-ish
Favourite MD game: .....*NHLPA Hockey*
Most favoured game in challenge:
.....*Bill Walsh College Football*
Special abilities:
twitchy leg. Dave W hopes constant twitching will put off The Kid.



"C'mon, hurry up, i've got to take a leak," squeaks a grimacing Dave Wilson (right), Electronic Arts' amazingly sad gamesplayer unextraordinaire. Meanwhile Dave "The Kid" Perry ignores the obvious spoiling tactics, and gets down to some serious gamesplaying.

The Kid's choice

BULLS VS BLAZERS

What was The Kid doing, we thought, as he surprisingly shied away from his beloved *NHLPA*. But there was method behind the sly one's madness for he knew of Dave Wilson's previous hockey experience, and knew the EA man would plump for that anyway.

Topically, the Bulls have just won the NBA championship for a third successive year (against the Phoenix Suns). The Kid was pumped up with thoughts of slam dunking like David Robinson and floating through the air like Michael Jordan. But would his diminutive 5' 5" figure prove a disadvantage on the court?

Dave Wilson's choice

NHLPA HOCKEY

Unbeknown to Dave, this is actually The Kid's favourite game. Previous real-life UK league hockey experience has proved invaluable in past confrontations for The Kid, who has hardly ever lost a game. However, what The Kid didn't know was that Dave Wilson (who previously worked on the now-defunct Zero magazine) had already completed a best-selling tips book detailing every shot of *NHLPA*. Although Dave did feel more confident with the previous game, *EA Hockey*, his commitment to Electronic Arts meant he would sacrifice this to promote the latest game.

Secret game

BILL WALSH COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Strictly speaking, this can't actually be called a "secret" game, because Dave did actually bring the game from Electronic Arts. After electric shock treatment, the EA man did admit that he had already played the game the night before. A practise match was promised, so, feeling supremely confident, The Kid agreed to play it even though he was at a severe disadvantage.

As it happened – and due to some flimsy excuse from Dave about having to get back for a meeting, and risking getting the sack – there was no time for a practise.

BULLS VS BLAZERS

Game one

Bulls vs Blazers came out in June, and the arrival the cart weeks before the challenge day meant both players had had time to practise. But even though Dave was promoting the game for EA, he admitted to only playing it the night before. "But I was getting three-pointers in from everywhere," he bullishly claimed. The Kid was not flustered; he'd put in many nights' play to hone his skills.

The contest was set-up for Arcade mode, and played with two-minute quarters, thus negating the problem of substituting. Obviously, only a Showtime match would cope with this kind of talent.

Both players chose to set up with aggressive full-court pressure, and also aggressive steal 'n' block tactics. From the outset, it was clear these boys weren't here to mess about: bodies would fly, the refs would be busy. In the interests of fairness, both players were allowed to chose an All-star team; Dave going for the East and The Kid donning his all-American bandana for the West.

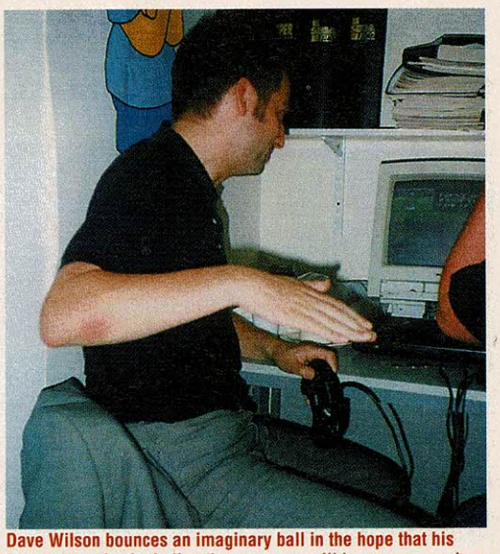
As the hooter sounded, The Kid was first to the ball. Chris Mullin stormed up the court to plump a marquee shot (the special shots performed by each player) right in the face of Dave's stone-footed All-stars East. This pattern was repeated another four times until Dave managed to sneak a basket. With the score 12-2 at the end of the first quarter, the East were looking for inspiration. But where from? Certainly not from lanky Larry Bird who got into serious fouling difficulty in the second period, giving The Kid easy free-throws. As the half-time hooter sounded, the 19-8 score meant The Kid could relax. Just what had happened to the three-pointers promised by Dave?

The game continued along the same format, with Clyde "the glide" Drexler topping the All-stars West's personal points total with 13 points.

Final score: Dave Wilson 20 The Kid 34
MVP: Clyde Drexler (All-stars West/Portland)

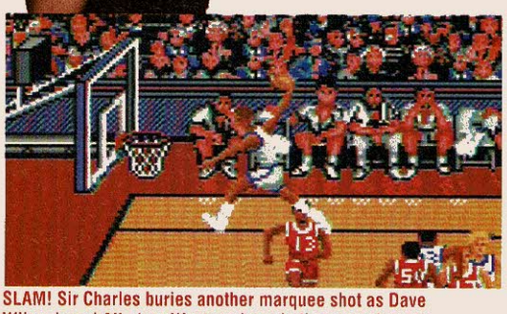
Larry Bird commits the first of many serious fouls. Mr Bird was a serious liabilty for EA's front man in the first game.

Whoosh! Clyde The Glide lets off another scorching two-pointer for The Kid's all-conquering All-stars West in the first game.



Dave Wilson bounces an imaginary ball in the hope that his incompetent basketball antics onscreen will in some way mirror real-life. No, Dave, that was art...

POWER challenge



SLAM! Sir Charles buries another marquee shot as Dave Wilson's sad All-stars West go down in the second game.

Game two

After fouling so badly in the first game, Dave immediately set his players into a more passive formation. The Kid held his aggressive stance. Before EA's rep had time to blame it on the luckless All-stars East, The Kid had already picked the team and proffered his victorious All-stars West instead. Dave Wilson wasn't stupid; he knew these guys were on a roll, and was happy to take the reigns.

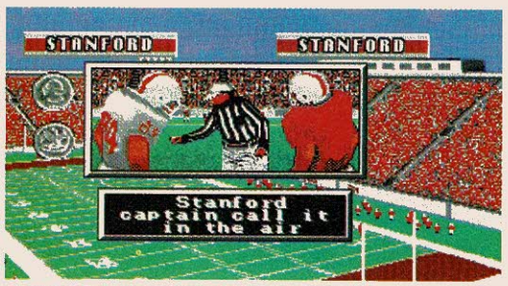
The start of game two was a familiar story, with The Kid's All-stars East storming into a 12-point lead, thanks to six marquee shots from "Sir" Charles Barkley. But a crucial foul on Dave while sinking a three-pointer lead to a crucial four-point play. Could this be a comeback?

Could it heck! Even after a level third period, Dave could do nothing to stop The Kid's basket-burying heroes. Only Chris Mullin could hold his head high, scoring half of the West's 16 points. "Sir" Charles and Michael Jordan topped the East's scorers with 12 and 10 points respectively. Not even constant standing up and sitting down, plus the annoying twitchy leg, could avert Wilson's defeat.

Final score: *Dave Wilson* 16 *The Kid* 33
MVP: Charles Barkley (All-stars East/Phoenix)

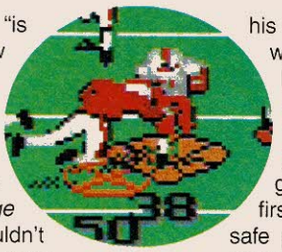
BILL WALSH COLLEGE FOOTBALL

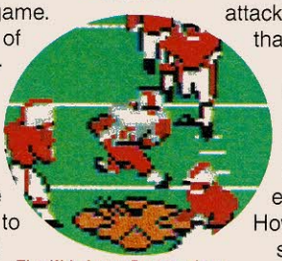
Game one



Dave couldn't even win the toss when playing his own secret game. When you're having a bad day, nothing goes right!

After a totally humiliating defeat at *Bulls vs Blazers*, Dave reached for inspiration from the pizza box. While munching away, he explained how he regarded *Bulls vs Blazers* as a tactical withdrawal. "The Kid," he mumbled, as chewy cheese dropped from his mouth, "is prone to get carried away. I have now lulled him into a false sense of security, and now that I've sussed out his weak points, I'm ready for a real battle." Of course, the fact that Dave was probably the only person in the country who had played *Bill Walsh College Football* at that time certainly wouldn't harm his chances of success at this game. (Let's face it, with The Kid on this sort of devastating form, Dave needed a miracle!)





The Kid shows Dave a clean pair of heels as he dances like Fred Astaire through the cumbersome red-shirts.

Yet again, in the interests of fair play (and because no-one else knew what the hell he was doing), Dave suggested that each of them have the same team. (A notoriously sly tactic, trying to confuse the adjudicator into mixing up the scores.) The Kid, resplendent in a virgin white kit, took to the grass gridiron at Stanford against Dave Wilson's red devils.

With The Kid still trying to suss out the controls, Dave shot forward to score a touchdown after just one minute. But – shock! – EA's wonder boy couldn't convert, leaving The Kid just six points behind. The Kid's responding drive lasted just two plays, and after a 75-yard pass The Kid's white Stanford team found themselves in Dave's endzone. Keeping cool, The Kid converted and took the lead. After trading touchdowns, Dave Wilson finished off the quarter with another spectacular touchdown. But, after a serious judgmental flaw, he opted for a fake conversion, and subsequently fluffed it, leaving him only 19-14 ahead as the hooter sounded.

As the second quarter commenced, both players were brimming with confidence. The Kid because for someone who had never played the game before, he wasn't doing half bad, and Dave Wilson because he was, for the first time, ahead in a game. But Dave's confidence was soon dashed after a series of unforced errors led to turnovers, which were converted into touchdowns. At half-time, Dave was down 19-28. Oh dear...

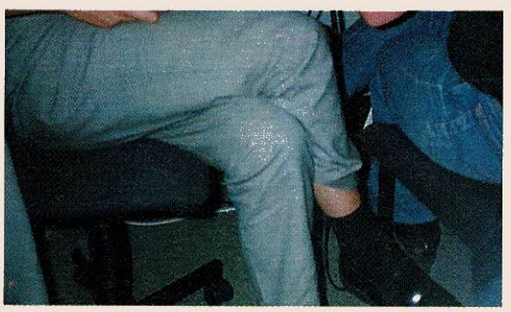
At half-time, we managed to get a word with Dave. He blamed his second-quarter downfall on his wide receivers. "They need their wrists slapping," he moaned. "Perhaps I was a bit cocky, though, trying to do something a bit special." Meanwhile, The Kid was quietly confident: "I'm just here to do the business. After getting to grips with the controls in the first quarter, I capitalised on good, solid, safe play to exploit Dave's over-confident attack. The lad's defense has more holes than Swiss cheese."

As The Kid kicked off the second half, he was caught off-guard by a 83-yard return from Dave to bring the score to 28-26. After The Kid missing a field goal, both players entered the endzone once more. However, the solid play of The Kid scared dainty Dave into missing another conversion. Now Dave was three points behind and in desperate need of a field goal. But it was not to come, and The Kid finished off the final quarter with two piercing runs through Dave's fumbling defence.

The crowd were left speechless. If The Kid couldn't be beaten at a game he'd never played before, what hope was there for the boy from Essex?

Final score: *Dave Wilson* 32 *The Kid* 49

"Look," exclaims The Kid, "I've never seen the scoreboard go that high in a football game." Dave is not impressed!



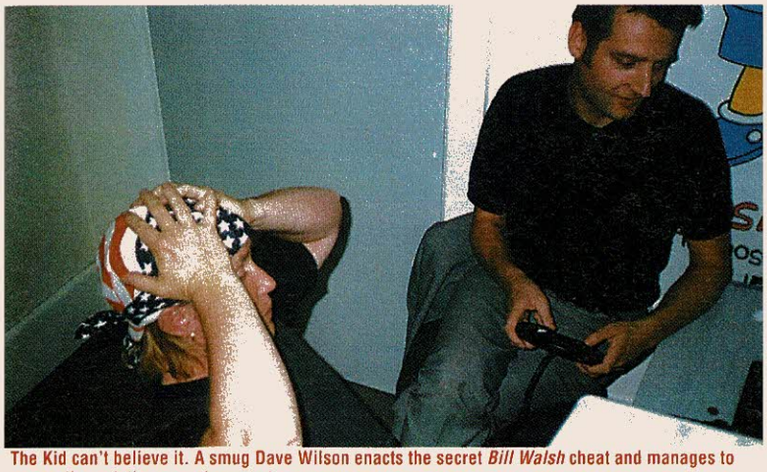
The infamous twitchy leg lays dormant as Dave shows us his brand-new Electronic Arts socks. The leg only moved once!

Game two

After such a humiliating defeat, it was agreed to play the second game of *Bill Walsh* after the completion of all the other contests. Dave just couldn't comprehend defeat at a game only he had played, and it seemed only fair to let him try to get his confidence back on his chosen game, *NHLPA Hockey*.

For chronological purposes, you should probably jump ahead to read the NHLPA challenge bit now. Go on, don't worry, I'll wait for you...

Yup, pretty grim, wasn't it? We were beginning to wonder whether playing games that Dave had a distinct advantage with was back-firing on us. Perhaps if we had chosen games that The Kid had played non-stop, and Dave hadn't even heard of (never mind played!), just perhaps Dave might have stood a chance. Still, it was too late now, and



The Kid can't believe it. A smug Dave Wilson enacts the secret *Bill Walsh* cheat and manages to scrape through the second encounter.

The minder is totally out of position as Federov slots home another one for All-stars West, The Kid's representatives in the first *NHLPA Hockey* confrontation.

the ever-ebullient erstwhile editor from Essex was eager to retain some sort of pride. "Okay," he announced, "this is definitely the last game, then I must go. (Words of a sad games addict, if ever we heard them.) I just want to win one game, or I'll never be able to return to the EA head-quarters." We quickly put up the office campbed, because, judging by his previous performances, he could be here a long time before he won a game.

Michigan's Ann Arbor college stadium was the venue for this purely-academic final battle. Michigan won the toss. Dave's Michigan, that is, because The Kid also confusingly chose Michigan. Never let it be said that anyone knew what the hell they were doing in this game!

The fairly uneventful first half was littered with fouls and off-sides as both players tried to find that one special move. However, at the end of the half a smug Dave Wilson was leading 27-21. The twitchy leg of Wilson was, it seemed, now beginning to work.

The pressure was sustained in the third quarter, even though The Kid managed to nudge ahead by one point (that missed conversion in the first half proved costly) mid-way through it. But as both teams entered the final five minutes play, the score had The Kid trailing 35-41.

After a fumbled ball, Dave pulled off the play of the match and scorched through The Kid's helpless defense to increase his lead to 12 after missing another conversion. EA's man certainly didn't bring his kicking boots with him, which left The Kid with a faint sniff of victory. The Kid fought well, but even with a scored fake conversion (worth two points in college footy), he could do little to prevent the final score.

Final score: *Dave Wilson* 54 *The Kid* 50

NHLPA HOCKEY

Game one

Undoubtedly both competitors' favourite game, the result of *NHLPA* was sure to cause tears for someone. After discussing the merits of the joypad (used by Dave) over the joystick (The Kid), they both settled in for a potentially explosive contest.

As with *Bulls vs Blazers*, it was decided that both players use All-star teams. Dave Wilson soon grabbed All-stars East, with Mario Lemieux leading the attack. At the other end of the ice, The Kid prepared his All-stars West, and, after numerous line changes to the starting six, was ready to clash sticks.

The Kid took first blood with a sneaky flick from Jeremy Roenick just 18 seconds into the game. Dave was speechless, and before he had time to recover, another puck was reverberating around his goalie's ears. This was the impetus Dave needed, and a well-placed slap from Stevens brought the score to 2-1. The Kid was not happy, and for the rest of the period went on what can only be called a goal riot. Even hospitalising the West's top goal-scorer Roenick (four in the first period) just before the hooter could not stop The Kid taking a 10-1 lead. The EA man's head was dropping faster than the pound.

The second period held little consolation for Wilson, although The Kid's scorching play was limited to just four goals, and Dave tripled his total to, er, three.

Leading 14-3 going into the final period, the ever-generous Kid removed his goalie from the ice, "just to make things a bit more challenging". Wilson was not amused, and even without a goalie to score passed, he couldn't keep the score from reaching massively humiliating proportions.

The crowd were left wondering if young Mr Wilson had actually played *NHLPA* before, or whether he had really used a bit of journalistic licence in his playing guide.

Final score: *Dave Wilson* 5 *The Kid* 17

MVP: Jeremy Roenick (All-stars West/Chicago)

Game two

After little respite for Dave, The Kid soon had the game set up for the second confrontation. With Dave now taking the victorious West, he was positive his luck would change. But, sadly and most embarrassingly for the EA whipping boy, the second game of *NHLPA* told a familiar story.

By the end of the second period, the lethal combination of Lemieux and Borque took the East to a 7-1 lead. Even the ruthless tactics employed to split Borque's skull open could not dent All-stars East's morale. These boys were cooking, and not even the great Wayne Gretzky could prevent the severe slapping dealt to Dave Wilson and his bunch of degenerates.

Final score: *Dave Wilson* 2 *The Kid* 11

MVP: Mario Lemieux (All-stars East/Pittsburgh)

THE DEMISE OF DAVE WILSON

Sad, oh, sad. Never has such a well-known and respected industry hard man received such a slapping from the MPs. He came, he saw, and... he got completely and utterly thrashed. All he could console himself with was the final game of *Bill Walsh College Football* – and even that contest was drawn a game apiece, with Wilson deserting the MEGA POWER offices before The Kid was due his third game. The credibility of the whole PR industry is now in jeopardy. We approached the increasingly-ageing-by-the-minute Wilson for a comment on his defeat... "No comment," he mumbled from beneath a four-pack of Heineken.

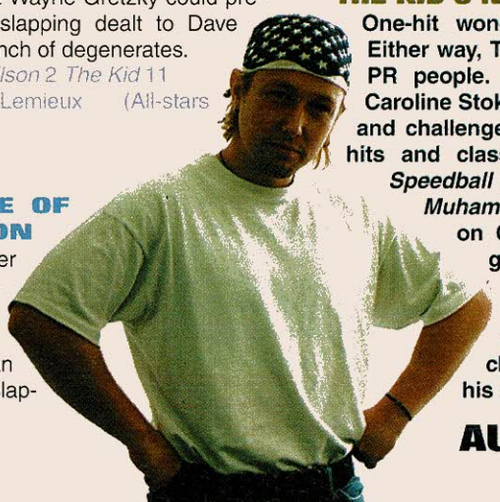
THE RISE OF THE KID

When God made The Kid, he threw away the mould. Never before have we seen such a games-playing expert at work. Dave Wilson was just a fly squashed under the boot of Perry, a mere inconvenience, an excuse for a free lunch... After the meeting ("contest" is a bit strong a word for what The Kid encountered), MEGA POWER's pocket Terminator, the publicity-hungry Dave Perry, grabbed the mike and had these few words to say:

"Get out of my way, all of you! I'm on a divine mission to purify the gamesplaying world. I can't be stopped, I won't be stopped, I'm a gamesplaying animal and I'm hungry for more..."

THE KID'S NEXT FIGHT

One-hit wonder or gamesplaying animal? Either way, The Kid is up one-nil against the PR people. Next issue we invite Virgin's Caroline Stokes to pick up The Kid's gauntlet and challenge him at some of Virgin's latest hits and classic games. With the likes of *Speedball II, Global Gladiators, Cool Spot, Muhammad Ali* and *Euro Club Soccer* on Caroline's shelves, you can be guaranteed of an action-packed confrontation. Join us next month when The Kid once again tries to grind another challenger's face in the dirt on his Arnie boots.

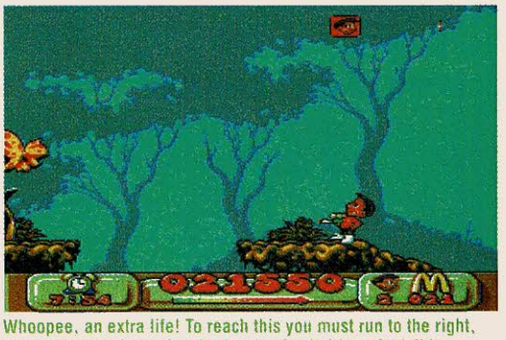


GLOBAL GLADIATORS

SLIME WORLD SLIME WORLD SLIME WORLD SLIME WORLD SLIME WORLD

This goober will constantly spit his filthy slime at you. If you stay in this position his slime will not affect you, get too close and your energy will go down. From here angle your gun and blast him away. The alternate method is to wait for a pause between his spitting and then waste him.

One of the many invisible platforms scattered all over *Global Gladiators*. The platforms are really narrow so don't move too far left or right or else you'll slip off.



Whoopee, an extra life! To reach this you must run to the right, where you see the arches in the sky. Again it's an invisible platform, so bounce along to claim this gift.

This vine, a leftover from Jack and the Beanstalk, has arches hidden at the top. Bounce up from the vines to collect them, but be careful, it's slippy.

The main objective is to waste the mutants and collect as many arches as possible. If you manage to collect over 75, at the end of the level you'll enter the bonus game. As you can imagine in Slime World, everything is really green and gooey.

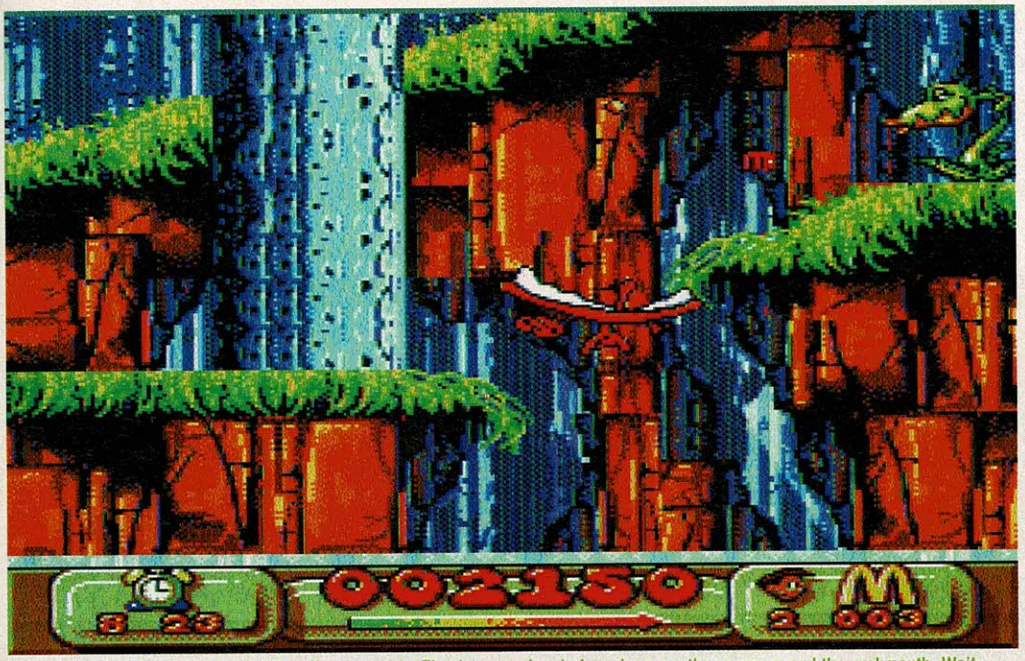
On the immediate screen, jump straight up and kill the goober. These are so-called because they suck, then spit out loads of slime. They will affect your energy so make sure you waste them first. Proceed through the stage and make sure you explore every way possible. If you see arches in mid-air, don't be dismayed, because there will be a way to get them. This is normally in the shape of invisible platforms or springs located nearby. Continue arrows are located all along each stage, and should be touched as they act as a resume point if you happen to die.

Moving right, you'll see a heart; to get this heart bounce off the spring and grab it to boost your energy back to normal. Above this platform is an extra life, and loads of arches. You'll need to make your way right and then jump across the invisible platforms. The key to this is to bounce along, then collect the extra life BEFORE you collect the last arch. You'll find the same technique can be used for the clock further on. The clock gives you more time in order to accrue arches and complete the level.

Within the three stages of Slime World, you'll find dangers everywhere. All the slime-o-matic machines which constantly churn out goo must be destroyed. Stand back as they explode or else you'll lose energy. Apart from the goober to contend with there's also squeak-beak, which is a very annoying bird, and slime pig. This pig will try to obstruct your every move. If you happen to fall into the slime, you'll instantly die. One important point to bear in mind, is that when you shoot you'll move back with the recoil of the gun, so make sure you're not stuck near dangerous ledges.

At the end of each stage should see Ronald McDonald. If you don't see him, it means you haven't collected enough arches. You must collect over 30 to finish the stage and move on to fight more freaks.

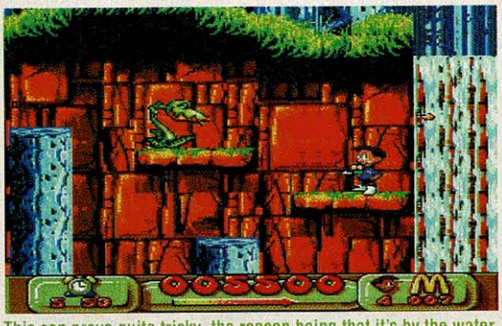
MYSTICAL FOREST MYSTICAL FOREST MYSTICAL FOREST MYSTICAL FORES



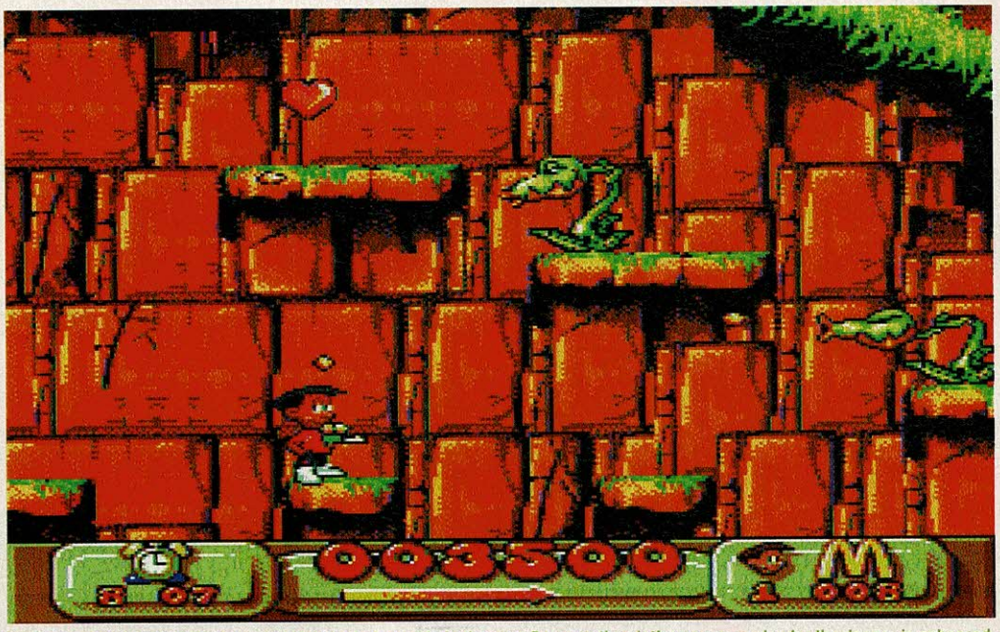
There are plenty of options, but they're all pretty nasty. The dangers ahead of you here are the snappers and the yuckmouth. Wait until the snapper is level with you then shoot him. Pause on the ledge and jump and fire to take out the spitting weed. Now collect those arches and get in that bonus game.

Before attempting this jump, you must get rid of the yuckmouth. If you don't kill him, when you jump on the stepping stone he'll fire at you.

Totally different in appearance to the last level, the Mystical Forest is full of hazards that will prevent you from progressing. For instance, there's Yuckmouth, a triffid like creature that spits venom at you. Biz E Beaver sounds quite sweet but he'll constantly throw logs at you, which often pushes you off balance. Snappy is hidden at the bottom in the water. At times you'll have to use the stepping stones to cross, which is when Snappy makes his move. Get ready with your gun otherwise you'll get a nasty bite. Axl, who's a walking axe, can provide you with serious grief, but is fairly easy to kill.



This can prove quite tricky, the reason being that it's by the water and the ledges are wet. Angle your gun and wipe him away, but remember, snappers lie in wait below.



Here's an energy heart, but as you would expect, danger is in the way. Because the platforms are so slender the danger is enhanced. Jump and fire to kill these Yuckmouths and collect that heart, you're going to need it.

Reminiscent of Eater Island, this landmark is the start of the danger zone. Run as fast as you can continually firing to avoid being hit.

Within the Mystical Forest you'll find arches scattered everywhere. Use the branches to bounce along. Occasionally you'll come across a hornets' nest, but don't be alarmed as surprisingly they won't hurt you.

The bonus items are hidden in variable places, so keep your eyes peeled for invisible platforms as they are located high up. Bounce off a branch to reach them and collect your prize. Tree stumps can also be used to access difficult places, like awkward tree branches. Hidden way up, half-way through the level, is a continue coin. This is invaluable as you only get one continue which is found right up in the trees. Where you see the McDonald arches you'll see the coin. Follow the same procedure as Slime World, leaving the arch before the item.

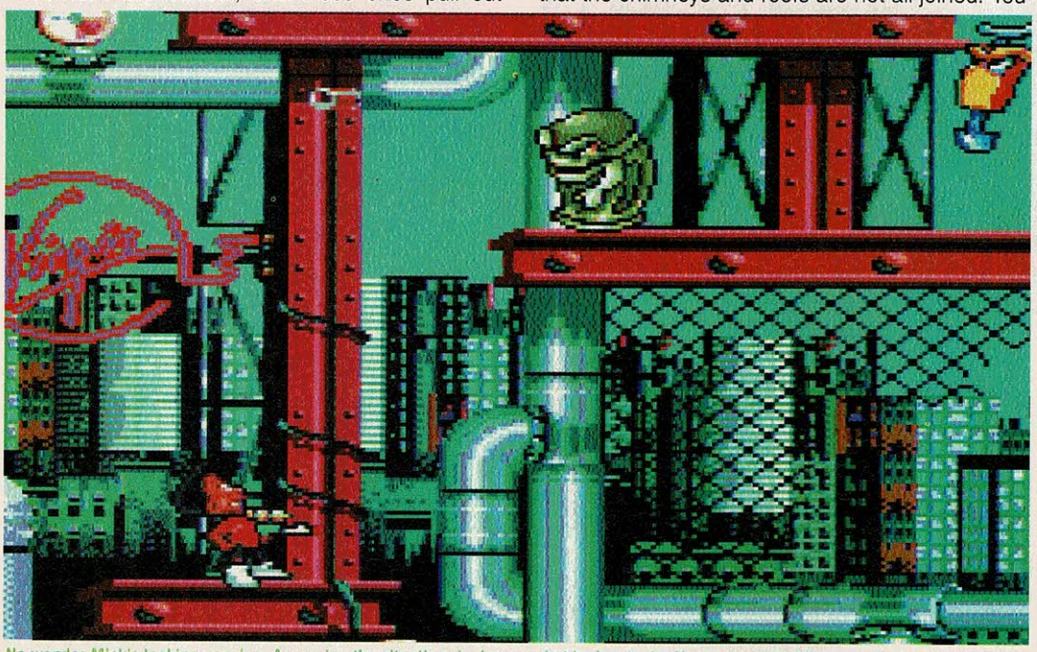
Yet again, as with all the four worlds in *Global Gladiators*, there are three stages. The second and third stages are not that dissimilar to the first, your enemies won't change, but you'll find that there's loads more jumping to be done . The jumping becomes nasty as the platforms become slippy, and if you fall you have no idea what's below. Two energy hearts are hidden on each stage and these really are essential as extra lives aren't that plentiful.

TOXI-TOWN TOXI-TOWN TOXI-TOWN TOXI-TOWN TOXI-TOWN TOXI-TOWN

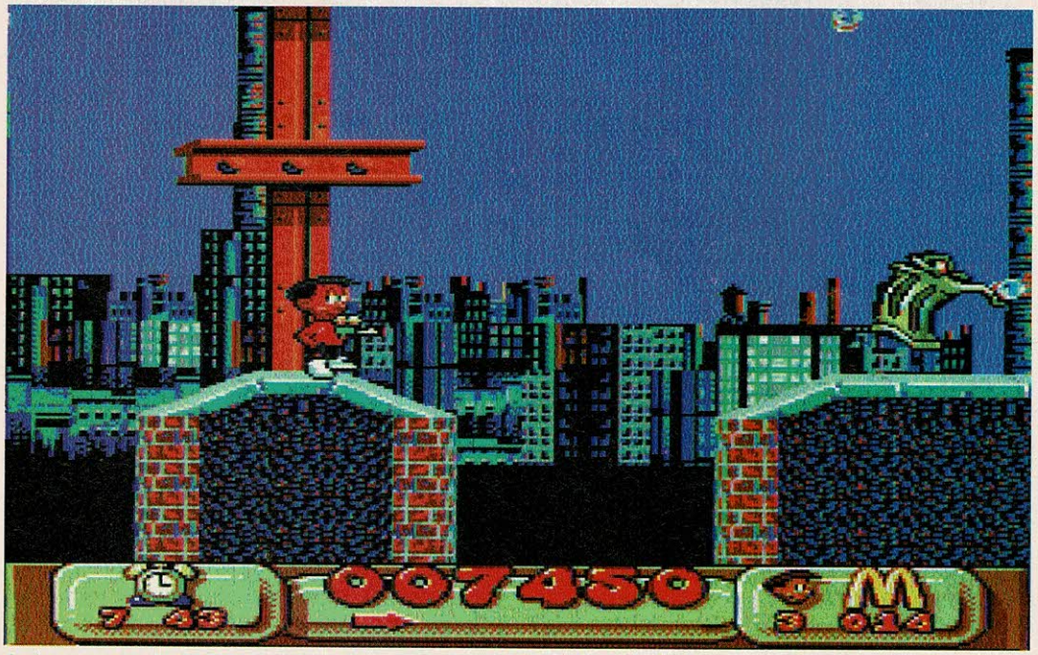
Resorting to an industrial landscape, Toxi-Town defines the ecological aspects of *Global Gladiators*. As chimneys pour out smoke into the atmosphere, and polluted clouds rush at you, you'll discover that this is not a healthy environment. The enemies are down to three this time, but they are more abundant. Jack, a pneumatic hammer, is quite slow moving but can still take a quarter of your energy, so use that trigger finger. Hot-head, as you might expect, is a ball of fire, and is very unpleasant. They seem to appear from nowhere and give you a serious burn. The other obstacle in your way is Trashcan. Walking Trashcans are surreal, and these ones pull out cans and other debris from their bins and hurl them at you. Hilarious the first time you encounter one, but when you're surrounded by about four of these bins, it's no laughing matter. The trick is to spot them before they spot you, and using your angled fire, blast them away.

The metal structure acts as a spring to access those difficult to reach items. Located at the top on these three stages is an extra life, hearts and a clock. The latter will give you an extra five minutes in which to complete the level.

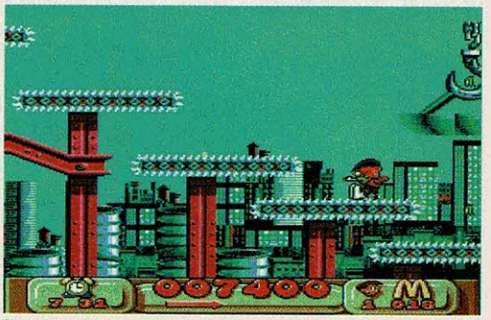
If you're running along the bottom across the rooftops be extremely careful. The reason being is that the chimneys and roofs are not all joined. You could be hurtling along at top speed and the next thing you know is that you're dead. Having got this far, you'll want to take it easy. That doesn't mean you should be apprehensive about locations and areas to explore, you should survey the surroundings first, though, and then go for it. As well as all the obstructions to avoid, from out of nowhere will appear tumbling tyres. These come totally unprompted and take out a large chunk of energy – lightning reflexes are called for. Throughout these three stages are plenty of arches, so collect as many as possible and get into that bonus game.



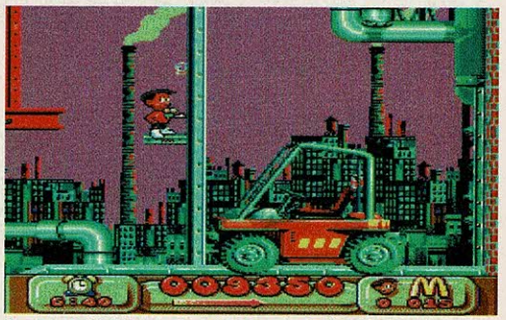
No wonder Mick's looking pensive. Assessing the situation, he knows what he has to do. Yes you guessed it, waste these suckers. Jump up to kill trashcan before he can throw anymore rubbish at you. The jack hammer will bounce along and try to land on you, so follow the same procedure by jumping whilst angling your fire.



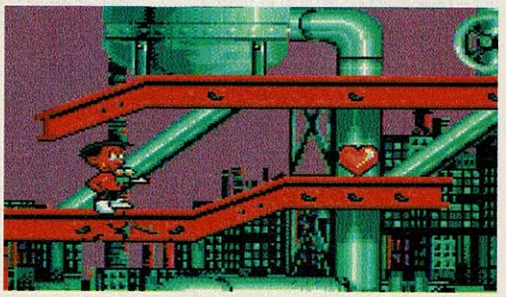
Again you can see, the trashcan is waiting to throw an empty can of Coke. There's double danger here: the first thing to do is clear the path by shooting the trashcan. Your fire will reach him from here, then prepare for the big jump. If you slip from here you'll instantly die and have to start from the last continue arrow.

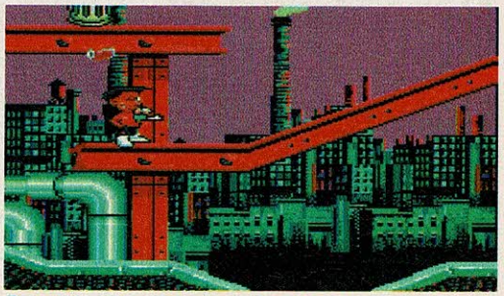


These moving platforms can place you in difficulty. You must walk in the opposite direction to avoid being trapped.



Use this forklift to access the ledges on the left-hand side. There's no danger from the forklift, but the trashcan's waiting so get ready with that gun.



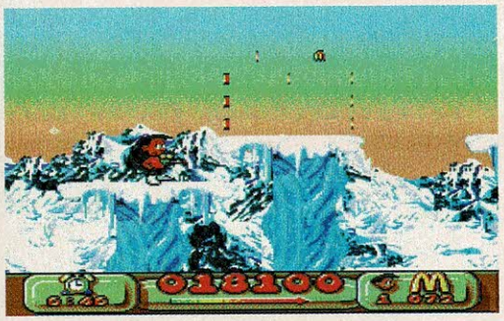


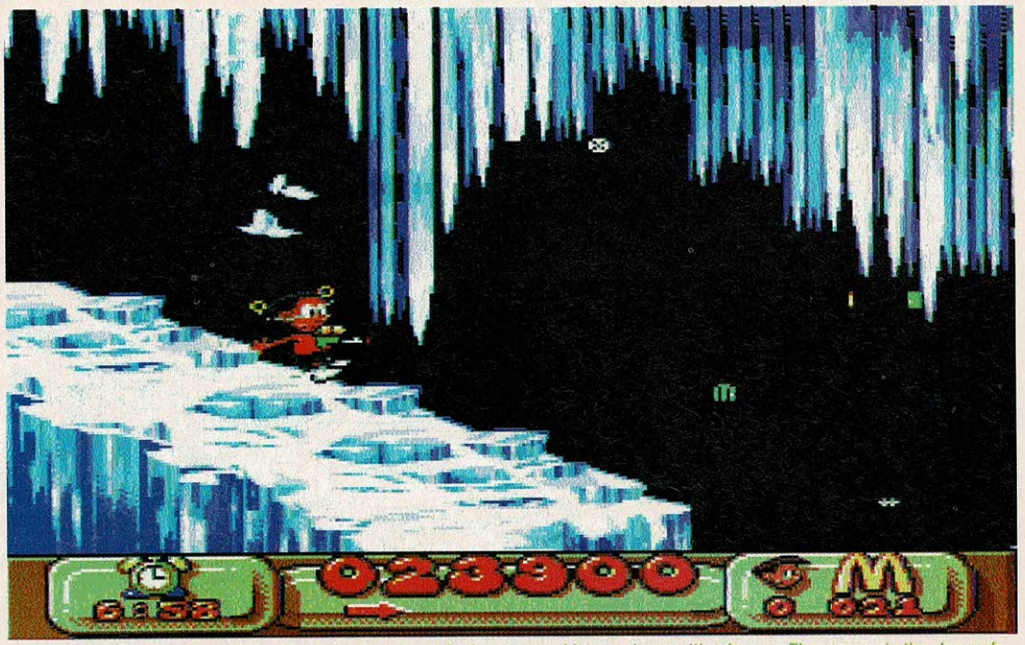
The problem lies with the can on the left because as you move right he'll launch an attack. Run quickly to avoid being caught by this can rapidly firing.

ARCTIC WORLD ARCTIC WORLD ARCTIC WORLD ARCTIC WORLD ARCTIC

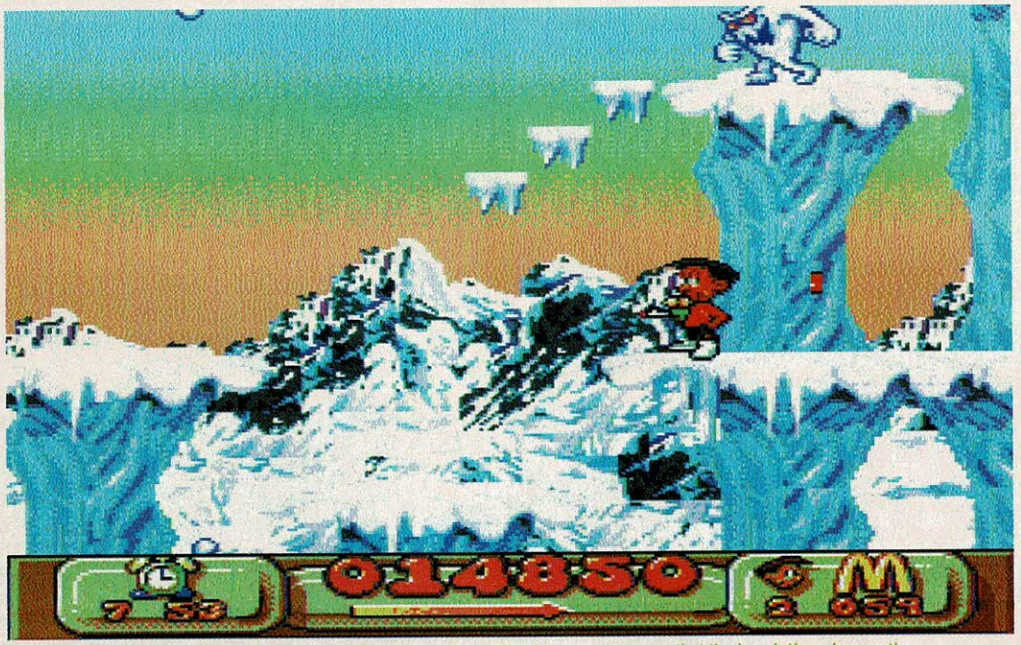
Slippier than the slime level, this cold and imposing area will have you sliding around all over the place. Oil is spilling into the land and sea, destroying the wildlife, so it's your job to save the day. As you can imagine, this world is covered in snow and ice, and being such a cold environment, the monsters are not very happy to see you.

There are only three types of monsters to deal with but that's quite sufficient, thank you very much. The polar bears, known to Mick and Mack as Frosty, are really sweet – it's a shame you have to kill them, as they look so happy skating on the ice. The yeti is a different story, as he's obviously had a bad day and consequently takes it all out on you. He'll not only charge at you but also throw loads of snowballs. The last thing to contend with is the splatter bats. These look pretty harmless but provide you with the most hassle out of all the monsters. They'll appear from nowhere and fly straight into you. As with the tyres of the last level, your reactions will have to be like lightning – which is easier said than done when there are two heading straight at you. There's no special technique to deal with them, you'll just have to be quick.





Arches galore to be collected from this stage. Unfortunately there are problems galore waiting for you. These come in the shape of the splatter bats, who'll appear from the hanging icicles. You'll only have a split second to shoot them, so you must be ultra fast on that trigger. As you can see, Mick was a bit slow on that one.



This very angry yeti is determined to give you a hard time. From this picture you can see that the ice platform has partly disintergrated, so your options are limited. Jump left to land back on the platform shooting like mad. At the same time jump quickly because it'll give way and you'll perish.

On the first stage use the oil pipes to collect the arches and hearts. Above two of the pipes are invisible platforms, which contain a much-needed extra life and plentiful arches. It's possible to collect 100 arches on these levels, as their locations are not that obscure.

The second and third stages take place in underground caverns. The second stage has the hazards of multiple splatter bats that won't leave you alone. Luckily there are your two hearts to pick up. Like the continue arrows, these come at just the right time. Being so close to the end of the game you'll not want to mess up, so only collect a heart when you desperately need it – it won't reappear if you die!

The third level utilises ice platforms for you to jump across. Some of these jumps are pretty severe, but coming off the platforms you'll be on solid ground. Where you can't go any further without dropping down, go to the right and pick up the arches and heart. When you can't see a platform to jump to, you know you're at the end. Step off the edge and you'll see two faces. They'll fire splatter bats at you from their mouths. You must shoot them, taking care not to slip off the platforms. When they start to crumble you've done it. The world is now a safe green place to live in. Three cheers for Mick and Mack!

BONUS GAME

Newspapers, cans and bottles drop from the sky and it's your job to recycle them. The only hassle is that you're not allowed to let even one container drop onto the floor. As they drop, hurl the objects into the correct recycling container for maximum points. If one hits the floor, the game is over. The best advice is to keep cool, and quickly survey which container's which.

INFINITE LIVES

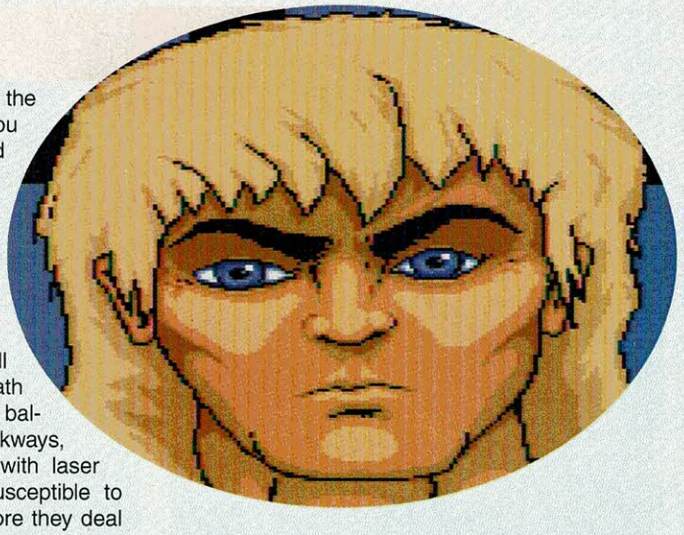
For infinite lives, press A, B, C, B, A, C, A, B, C, B, A, C at beginning of the game whilst the screen displays the Virgin logo. You'll have to be pretty quick because it doesn't stay on for long.

STAGE SKIP

For stage completion, press B, C, B, A, B, B, C, B, A, B when you are on pause. In any stage hit START, enter the cheat and hit START again to jump forward a sub-section. Just keep doing it to complete a world.

WOLFCHILD

LEVEL GUIDE



SKYJACK

You'll appear on one of Chimera's battle cruisers. You start off with three smart bombs and in human form, and will instantly be attacked. Use your smart bombs wisely as you don't want to waste them. Located up the ship's mast is a power-up that will transform you into Wolfchild; once this is done then your enemies are easier to defeat. If you take too many hits, you will return to human form. Break open every possible crate, as more than likely there will be special weapons up for grabs. Avoid the flapping wings of the end human/vulture to defeat him.

THE ANCIENT TEMPLE

After surviving the jungle, you'll come across the ancient temple. Littered with more mutations, this level proves equally, if not more, perilous than the last. Again items and bonuses are scattered all over the place, but yet again they are extremely difficult to get to. Patience is the key, so wait until the time is appropriate and then go for it! There are traps all over the place, set by the beetles and the very angry fire-spitting wasps, so care must be taken to avoid falling into their lair. Options are limited if you do fall into the traps but, if you're still Wolfchild, you will have a chance. The second stage is as massive complex filled with fellow mutants, but these guys aren't your friends so keep on your toes.

CHIMERA HEADQUARTERS

Having managed to escape the clutches of the monsters, you will have located the HQ, hidden beneath the temple. The first stage has you balancing precariously on rickety walkways, whilst being attacked by mutants with laser bazookas. The lasers are very susceptible to your energy so deal with them, before they deal with you. Your psychic powers and special weapons are totally relied upon if you're to defeat these weirdos. Deep underground, within the laboratories you'll find Chimera's latest invention. It is a super-armed genetic mix-up that is virtually unstoppable. Use your intelligence and fighting skills to outwit this mutant. Confuse him by having lightning reactions, and then strike whilst he's lost.

DRAXX'S LAIR

Well this is it. After the trouble you've been through to get this far, don't think you're in for an easy ride. All the weight of Chimera's mutant army is waiting to give you your final mullering. Traps galore tempt your every move. If you fall into one it's certain death, so keep your eyes and wits about you. Fire and ambushing soldiers lie in wait, so make sure your weapons are stocked to the max in order to stand any chance of finding your father.

Once you've managed to battle your way through, you'll see a friendly face. It's your father, looking totally helpless. Draxx will call upon all his majestic psychic abilities to defeat you. Prove your strength and will by crushing this little pimp and releasing your father.

THE JUNGLE

On leaving the panic-stricken battle-cruiser, you'll find yourself deep in the jungle. Huge and hidden dangers await you. Around every tree or wall there is a deformed genetic experiment preparing to attack you. There are lots of small beasts that arise from the floor and cause a loss of energy. These are located all over the jungle and are tricky to avoid, so time your jumps to stay safe. Seed pods hold items and bonuses, but they are not always easy to obtain. Work out the safest route before you take the plunge. On the third stage you will be hunted by a camouflage specialist so keep your wits about you.

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TINY TOON ADVENTURES

TOON TRAVELS

THE FOREST

These routes are laden with treasure, so be inquisitive and see what you find. Collect 50 carrots to obtain the special weapon. It's best not to use them, as cashing them in at the end of the level will give you 5,000 points, which is half an extra life. Very importantly, stay well clear of the spikes, and always check what's beneath you before you launch into a big jump. Search the tree-tops on stages ten and 11 for some extra bonuses.

UNDERGROUND CAVERNS

Hidden passages and caverns are everywhere, so keep 'em peeled. Massive amounts of lava await your rabbit fur, so mind your step. Spiked balls can end your journey instantly, so well-timed jumps are essential. The main routes will take you to the exit, but to find hidden exits, perilous searches need to made deep within the caves.

THE GHOST SHIP

Work out your route then keep cool when jumping. Take time perfecting the special off-the-wall jump. Take care when jumping, otherwise you might find yourself back to a previous part that has just taken ages to complete. The ghosts themselves are easily defeated individually, but they also attack in groups, so, begrudgingly, you might have to use a special weapon.

ICELAND

Don't rush about. Tread extremely carefully as this is very slippy and dangerous. On the moving ice blocks don't commit yourself unless everything ahead is clear. Some of the clouds are likely to vanish just before you jump, so follow the pattern and leg it! The snowmen are best dealt with and not avoided.

FACTORY VALLEY

This industrial level is by far the toughest. Keep away from anything mildly electrical as it's not good for your hearts. Wait for the electric to be cut from the robots before you try killing them. TVs should be jumped on, but watch out for their arms. To progress upwards at the end of the level you must locate the on/off switches that activate the platforms. Jump on the flashing platforms before they disappear.

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FFFB1 10002 – infinite mates
FFFB1 1000X – replace X with amount of power (eg, FFFB1 10009)
FFFB0 F0032 – one carrot = 50 carrots. Switch off Action Replay at end of level, then back on at start of next

LEVEL LICKERS!

Dizzy

Use the tree branches to avoid both enemies. Even though Dizzy's your mate, he will still sap your energy if you touch him because he's under the mad scientist's spell. Slap the scientist on the head four times to make him explode and free Dizzy.

Montana Max

Max will have a go at you himself as he is totally deranged. As Max is pushed to the ceiling, jump and hit him until he gives in.

Porky Pig

The ice block in the middle is the key to defeating this guardian. Use it to jump onto and hit the flying scientist. Take care to avoid Porky as he will try to suck you up into a vacuum cleaner. Always go in the opposite direction from him.

Calamity Coyote

The scientific slapper appears from any of the boxes at random, so jump about from box to box, waiting to bounce on his bonce. Meanwhile, avoid the bombs (remember, jumping in the water won't harm you) and their crazed thrower, Calamity Coyote.

Final freak

This well 'ard geezer will give you an exceedingly hard time and is assisted by that weasel Max. Follow the procedure of hitting him on the head repeatedly until Max appears. He'll eventually die and the treasure will be yours.

Ed the Hammer

Ed uses his mighty hammer in order to loosen the stalactites from the roof. Whilst avoiding these, wait for the mad scientist until he hovers. When he does so, land on his head. Repeat till dippy's dead.XXXXXXXXXXXX

Toxic Revenger

When the head of the flying toon appears, get ready to jump on the platforms as he shoots out. He follows you around, so lead him in a certain direction then double-back on him. Bonce-bash the scientist until he explodes, taking care to avoid any contact with him.

PASSWORDS

Level 05 –	YYQG	LDDD	DDQD	DDDD	DDTP
Level 12 –	RNQQ	QLDD	LDWQ	MDLL	LDKG
Level 17 –	KTWW	WQGL	LLWW	TXDL	DDJX
Level 20 –	ZJQQ	WWBG	LLWQ	TXBD	DLHQ
Level 22 –	QZQQ	QWBB	DLWQ	TXBK	DLHR
Level 28 –	PGWW	WWBW	ZKQQ	TXBW	ZGQG

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH

SKOOL DAZE

Willy's a cool dude. Playing his schooldays' adventures, we can all see a bit of ourselves in him. As with most cool dudes, Willy's main ambition in life is to be the best video gamesplayer in the world. But Dynamix, the developers of this American import soon to come out officially, have not made his ambition easy to fulfil. This is not your conventional game, there is no division of levels and no guardians. It's the last day of school and all Willy wants to do is go home and practise on his Nintari. Unfortunately for Willy, life's not that simple.

The story unfolds... Willy's frog, Horny, has escaped from Willy's backpack and during school assembly leaps onto the platform and pulls off the headmaster's toupee. Worst luck for Willy is that Horny always returns without fail, so three guesses as to who gets the flack. For the trouble he's caused, Willy gets a detention (on the last day of school!) with the evil Ms Glass.

In the detention the three naughty boys have to do a composition. Using the interactive sections, Ms Glass asks Willy a question. A box will appear on the screen and it's up to you to make the right choice. The responses vary from politeness to rudeness. The threat of military school is constantly pushed at Willy if he's bad, so choose carefully. The best way to get out of this situation is to be polite. "I dunno, Ms Glass," guarantees your safety for the time being. "No, Ms Glass," again makes safe your passage onto the next screen. If you choose the other options you'll wind up in Mr Fricks' (the head) office and then you will be in big trouble.

Whatever you do, don't wind up in the nurse's room: although she is very fit, she diagnoses that you are seriously ill. This leads to a visit to the hospital and the end of the game.

Throughout the screens keep looking through the magnifying glass to check what's about and where it is. By far the best piece of advice is to avoid getting into trouble. Whether this means

not being cheeky in reply to questions, or avoiding situations where you'll find yourself in trouble, it's always the safest bet. For example, when Willy takes Rianan to play outside this seems perfectly harmless. That is until you see Rianan flying up into the air and landing with a crash – whoops, Willy's off to join the cadets. Common-sense plays a large part in this game, as does logic, but remember, politeness is the key to Willy's success so he can escape military school and become the greatest gamesplayer in the world – next to you!

PLAYING NINTARI

Also within the game is a sub-game which is operated when you check out the Nintari in Willy's room. The best policy is to be polite and this in turn will guarantee your safe passage throughout the game. If things are really starting to get out of hand, and it looks like you're on your way to military school, don't despair. Within the game is a secret weapon, and if you hold buttons A, B and C together Willy will start to glow. After a while a shock wave will destroy surrounding blocks, and assist Willy. The only trouble is that it takes a lot of energy.

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FLASHBACK

LEVEL GUIDE

LEVEL ONE

Conrad Hart finds himself deep within a galactic jungle. One of the most essential parts of *Flashback* is to practise all your moves. Learn to jump long and short distances, as the game requires loads of intense leaps. On the first screen you'll find yourself with an initial small jump. Once completed drop down and collect the holocube, as it contains important info and can open a door.

This level is crucial for collecting items that will prove crucial in later stages. For example, when you see the wounded man, give him the teleporter, and in return he will give you an ID card. Located on this level are energy points where you can recharge your shield, enabling you to take more hits. Halfway through the level you will come across a particle bridge. After you have wrestled the magnetic cartridge off the guard, insert it into the particle bridge. This will then create a beam that guarantees a safe passage. Near the end of this level is a floor that will vanish beneath your feet, so don't hang about.

LEVEL TWO

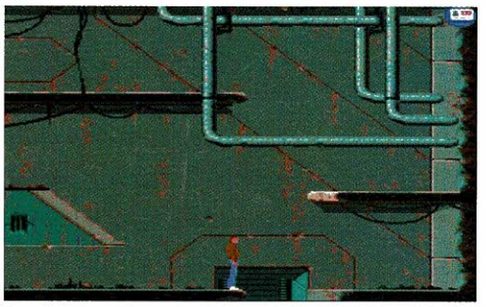
On this level you will face two big jumps so make sure you take a long run up. From here make your way upwards, and get ready with your gun as two cops are after your blood. This is where you'll bump into your pal, Ian. He's an old friend from the past, but you can't remember him. Ian sits you down in a chair and implants your memory back into your brain. You'll leave Ian with a force-field added to your inventory.

Your main mission in Asia is to collect a package from a shop and take it to Africa. Sounds easy, but Titan Travel is guarded by a policeman who you must dispose of. To go anywhere and work you'll require a work permit, and the only place to get this is the admin offices in Africa. Located within Africa are the lethal silver spheres. These will not leave you until you have blasted them; every time they hit you, you lose a shield. Your other designated mission within Africa is to guarantee the safe passage of a VIP to a laboratory. People are out to get him, so be ready with your gun.

LEVEL THREE

America's full of shady characters, and lo and behold, you have to meet one. Under instructions from Ian, this man will issue you with false papers allowing you to enter the Death Tower, the possible ticket back to Earth. Nothing's free in this world and the papers are going to cost you 1500 credits, so you must get a job. You've already completed two jobs in the previous level, three more await you.

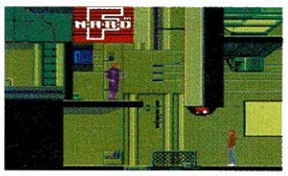
The zone has been infiltrated by cyborgs and it's up to you to dispose of them. At the bar, you'll meet a nasty cop, waste him and collect the key to challenge the cyborgs. Your next job involves replacing a defective chip that will melt down the city if it's not replaced. For your final job you must clear out all the illegal mutants that have been littering the zone. Approach with caution as these freaks aren't that easy to kill. Once you've finished your day's work, go and collect your pay and face the Death Tower.



LEVEL FOUR

Within the eight levels of the tower are cyborgs, laser guns, bombs and trapdoors, all waiting to prevent you winning those tickets. The first level is a challenge against a cyborg. Roll to avoid the gunfire, and shoot as he pauses; activate your shields to deflect the shots. Sub-levels two-six are virtually similar but with more cyborgs. There's an added problem of bombs but stay sharp and you'll avoid being blown to bits. Level seven has doors that can only be opened by stepping on the pressure pads – unfortunately you'll be followed by those dreaded silver spheres, so have your gun ready. The final level is simple.

LEVEL FIVE

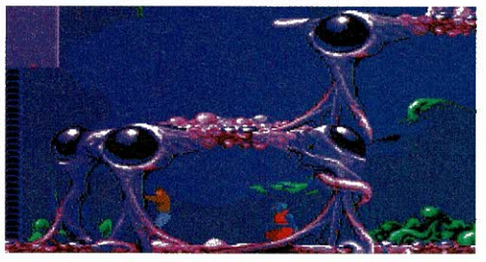


You arrive on Earth only to find the police hot on your tail because of the fake ID. The airport turns into a massive blood-bath as your only option is to shoot it out with the fuzz. At the bottom-left of this stage, use the lift to climb onto the light fitting. Smash the glass and obtain the key which will open the door on the far right. Once you've made it through the door, you'll come face to face with the spheres. Be quick to dispose of these and go right. Hidden half-way up is another key which will allow you access to another room.

The second stage opens with Conrad behind bars and no gun. Leg it right, using your shields to avoid the guards' gunfire and collect your gun. Save your position and waste the guard. You'll need to find the teleporter receiver and controller. These are located at the top on the left-hand side. This will enable you to go through energy beams and particle beams. When you have collected the teleporter, get the exit key.

LEVEL SIX

Roll and roll until the aliens are in human form, then blast them. Luckily there's a human scientist on this alien planet who's invented a bomb to waste these freaks. Find the scientist and detonate the bomb. Guards and bombs are the main problem. When you are approaching the scientist, you'll see he's trapped behind a door. Pick up a rock and place it on the pressure pad to hold the door open.



Escaping from here means you have to shoot the heart three times to open the doors. Once they're open, waste the guards and flee right. Place the bomb and push the switch, to drop the bomb in the centre of the planet. You only have one minute to escape, but you'll make it in time to watch the explosion from space.

PASSWORDS

Level 1 PIXEL
Level 2 BETSY
Level 3 STUDIO
Level 4 TOHO
Level 5 AKANE
Level 6 INCBIN
Final CYGNUS

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Cheats sometimes PROSPER

Datel are THE rebel Sega manufacturer. Without any approval or endorsement, they released the Mega Drive Action Replay knowing full well that Galoob/Code Masters were already deeply embroiled in the law courts for releasing a similar device in America.

But they'd done their homework. From roots that stretch back to the CB boom of the early Eighties, they have seen many a software and hardware manufacturer come and go. Yet they are still here – and growing larger by the minute. Dominic Handy spoke to their jovial front man, Mark Wallace, and hoped that some of their good fortune would rub off...

Datel have a lot to answer for. To Sega owners they are simply known as the folks that help out users in predicaments; whether they be with import incompatibility or with cheats for games. But to a whole generation of computer users, they are the company that gives you what you want.

Datel's founder and owner since the company was formed, the publicity shy Mike Connors, started out life flogging CB units in the early Eighties. From there, he jumped onto the rapidly growing computer bandwagon. Datel's first products – Kempston joystick interfaces, mice, sound samplers, light pens, robot controllers – gave Spectrum users a chance to push their machines beyond the limits of their rubberised keyboards. Before long, Datel had expanded into plug-in gizmos for the C64. The most successful of these was, without doubt, the Action Replay, now on its eighth Commodore version. They reckon to have sold hundreds of thousands of this cart alone.

With the Action Replay, Datel hit upon the perfect hacking device, allowing users to do technically advanced things with their computers without needing a programming certificate in machine code. With each computer/console version of the Action Replay, they added and adapted the software for the host machine. So while Amiga owners might want to grab screens, Sega owners could find extra lives. No machine in the Sega range has escaped the foraging fingers of Datel, with plug-in devices for every Sega machine, most recently the import-busting CDX for the Mega-CD.

For almost four of Datel's years, ex-programmer Mark Wallace, Datel's public face, has watched the company's direction change from a highly computer-based manufacturer via mail order to the main hardware supporter of consoles in Europe. Two years ago, he predicted and then helped create the console boom, and now, with a studious eye, he is looking forward to prosperous years. Datel have already sold nigh on a million plug-in devices, and, according to Wallace, they have only just begun...

The latest version of the Pro Action Replay even works with the new Mega Drive 2. When Sega release a new bit of hardware anywhere in the world, Datel make it their job to track it down and try all their devices on it.

Both Datel and Code Masters have failed to produce a cheat device for the Mega-CD. With the release of the CDX, you have proved that you know your way around the machine, so why wasn't an Action Replay included in that device?

The reason we couldn't turn Sega Action Replay into CDX Action Replay was because of the limitations of the ASIC, the chip inside all the Action Replays and CDXs. Roy, the hardware engineer, is already working on a new chip, nicknamed the "super chip".

Does this mean we're going to see a jump in the price of the CDX Pro Action Replay?

No. It's fairly expensive to develop a chip in terms of NRE [non-recurring engineering] costs, which amount to £10K-15K. But it's definitely worth investing as Sega Action Replay has done very well for us. The new CD Action Replay will contain the CDX, the Pro Action Replay and the Universal Adaptor all in one cart.

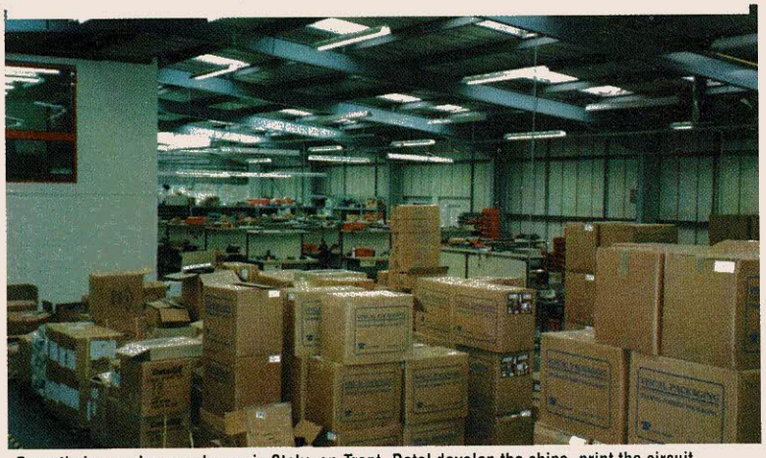
Datel's latest piece of wizardry, the CDX, allows any Mega Drive to play any CD game on any Mega-CD – even the latest Mega-CD 2. So far, Datel haven't encountered any incompatibility problems they couldn't solve.

So when are we likely to see the CD version?

I don't think it'll be too long. Definitely before Christmas. I'm not sure at the moment, purely because of the sales of the Mega-CD unit in the UK. Sega claim to have shipped 70,000 Mega-CDs

"It's dead easy," says Datel's Mark Wallace, "you just get these Mega Drive boards, cut 'em into eight, stick a few chips to 'em and you have the Action Replay." Anyone want to try?

You've got all this money cluttering up your bank account, so what do you do? Why not just lash out on a video-editing suite – after all, it's tax-deductible, right? This high-tech room has only been used for one Datel video production so far... Still, it looks impressive.



From their massive warehouse in Stoke-on-Trent, Datel develop the chips, print the circuit boards, design and print the packaging, box up the units and then ship them all over the world. "We try to be as self-contained as possible," explains Mark Wallace.

in this country – and they probably have, but Dixons and Rumbelows have still got them on their shelves. From retailers I've spoken to, it's not sold through that well. But the CDX has done very well initially, with us selling thousands in the first couple of weeks, purely because it works on Japanese Mega-CDs as well.

All the Datel plug-ins are designed for every machine. What do you estimate the Japanese MD machine user base in the UK is?

There's got to be a lot. I would think there are at least 20,000. There have been a lot of grey importers. In their heyday, single importers were selling hundreds of machines a week, so there's got to be a lot about. But those days are gone.

Nintendo had already had problems with the grey importing of the NES – and subsequently chip-locked all their software – so why do you think Sega let the grey import market evolve so far before they did anything about it?

Perhaps they thought they were so big they could sort it out, but they soon found out they couldn't stop anybody importing. The importers definitely created the market for Sega in the UK. When the first Mega Drives hit the UK, people were prepared to pay more, even if the pictures weren't as hot as they should have been. But they would have one, and the next-door neighbour would come around and see what it could do, and word of mouth would do the rest. Importers sold a lot of machines before Sega UK kicked in.

With the first Universal Adaptor, you claimed to have an 80% success rate on games, although it's now 100%. What problems did you encounter in the initial development?

The first Universal Adaptor we completed had problems straight away when *Cool Spot* and *Global Gladiators* [both from Virgin] were released, so then we had to develop another version pretty quick, and that one does everything we've come across, even *Andre Agassi* which won't normally play on modified machines.

Unlike the SNES, Mega Drive carts are not chip-protected. That's a myth, it's all done by software. There are other devices like ours about, but they only work on European machines. There are a lot of Japanese machines in the UK. Ours will work with any game on any machine from any country.

What problems did you encounter, technically and legally, when you designed the Sega Action Replay?

Technically, not much. We had already developed the Amiga version, which also uses the 68000 chip. It didn't take our guys long to suss it out. Legally, we had no questions in the UK. In the States, they objected to the packaging, because it used the word Genesis on it. So we went away, consulted our legal guys, and got around it. We don't sell directly into the States at the moment, but we're certainly looking into it. It is undoubtedly a huge market.

Ever thought about entering the Japanese market?

They're not interested. They don't cheat. The Action Replay is non-existent in Japan, although there are copies of it in Taiwan and Hong Kong. I think the Japanese just like the achievement of playing a game all the way through without any help.

The Game Genie is obviously your biggest competitor, how do you rate it compared to the Action Replay?

Obviously, you would expect me to say the Pro Action Replay is better, but it really is; you've just got to look at the magazine support. It's simply because ours has a built-in game trainer. You buy the latest game and you want to train it there and then. You don't want to sit and wait two months for *Ecco the Dolphin* codes to come through, when you can have all of them within 20 minutes on the Pro Action Replay. Our codes are printed everywhere, even in the States, and we also have a helpline for people.

You've done the Action Replay, the Universal Adaptor and now the CDX, what more can you do to the Mega Drive? Have all the good ideas been used up?

It's very difficult. At the moment just variations on a theme, using combinations of existing products until we exhaust them. Presently, we bring out a Sega add-on every five or six months. We're probably the most prolific computer/console games hardware manufacturer in Europe.

We're just waiting to see what Sega produce next. I'd like to see a 32-bit system at least, with a built-in CD-ROM. It must be one unit, not with a bolt-on CD unit, or it won't encourage CD software. NEC's TurboDuo [a PC Engine and CD in one unit] is already selling loads of software in Japan, with a growing market in the States. It also needs a decent display. Things like *Sewer Shark* and *Night Trap* are nice, but they are still a bit rough around the edges. The Giga Drive [info leaked from Sega last year] was supposed to be 32-bit, so they must have a 32-bit machine in one form or another in development. I'm just waiting for that...

A-Z of tips

Tips, tips and yet more tips are what we've got here. In the A-Z of Tips we aim to give you the most useful tips we can find for every game on Mega Drive and Mega-CD. Additions and changes to the A-Z each month are printed in red text (although you won't find any this issue obviously).

But it doesn't stop there because if you can find a special cheat or hidden option for a game that's not listed, we want to hear from you. (All corrections to errors are also appreciated!) There are £5 software vouchers for every new cheat that we print, which means you get the money and we get the best guide around.

AFTERBURNER 2
Level select
Hold A, B, C and press START on the title screen to enter a level select. Use the joypad to select a level, then press START to play.

AIR DIVER
Invulnerability
Go to the map screen and place the cursor over an area where there are no enemies. Hold START and press A, B, C, A, A, B, C, B, A and B. Now hold START until the game commences.

AISLE LORD
Avoid combats
Go to the config screen and choose no sound effects. Now press A, B, C, C, B, A, B, A, C, A, C, B, A. The screen flashes to confirm the cheat.

ALESTE
Level select
From the title screen, reset the Mega Drive ten times. Now enter the options screen while holding LEFT-DOWN. You should get an extra select option.

ALEX KIDD IN ENCHANTED CASTLE
Avoid sub-game
To continue the game without having to play scissors-

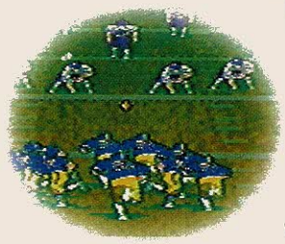
CENTURION
Password
Want the world? Type in this code.
QDUA YQ25 5555
55NK VKXW IPJ1

CURSE
Level select
Press RESET, then button A and START. You'll then enter the config screen and be able to choose your start level.

CYBERBALL
Password
Enter CGBB B8FB BB2V to win the game with the Chicago Killers.

DANGEROUS SEED
Extra credits
Start the game and press LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT and RIGHT on the title screen for 99 credits.

DARIUS 2
Zone select
Press C, A, C, B, C, A, B, A, B, C, A on the title screen.



FANTASIA
Extra items
Start stage one, go down the stairs and shoot at the two enemies. Two brooms will appear from the right. Take these to the left and shoot the first one, then loads of items will appear.

FASTEST ONE
Invincible tyres
Choose World Championship Mode and enter HAPPY NEW YEAR as your name.

FERIOS
Extra credits
When Chapter 1: Devil in Diros comes on screen, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A.

FIGHTING MASTERS
Same players
When selecting the first player, put your cursor over your character and press UP and A simultaneously. Player two will now also appear as this monster.

FIRE MUSTANG
Extra life
Just hold LEFT and C then press START on the title screen.

HARD DRIVIN'
Easier challenge
You don't have to race the Phantom Photon on the stunt track, just smash through the barrier to go around the speed track instead.

HELLFIRE
Extra continues
Choose hard from the options screen then go to the sound select and listen to any tune for 70 seconds. The game should start and replace the difficulty setting with "YEAH RIGHT". Cheat mode is now active and you have 99 continues.

HERZOG ZWEI
Password
Use JLJO1GLAOKN to get to the last level.

HUMANS
Passwords
Level 60 – YNTBXYJYNWLK
Level 70 – VMPKNRSXXYTR
Level 80 – XPMNWJKFNQZC

THE IMMORTAL
Invincibility
Wait for the level name to appear then hold START. Now

paper-stone, go to any boss and as soon as the chit-chat is out of the way, press START to get the select screen, then START again to proceed.

ALIEN³
Level select
Plug two controllers into the Mega Drive and go to the options screen. Press C, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, A, RIGHT and DOWN on the second joypad and you will hear a power-up noise. Start the game, then pause it. On pad one press C, A and B to skip the level.

ALIEN STORM
Unlimited continues
Choose Scooter. When your life gets to zero, self-destruct and you can carry on without dying.

ALISIA DRAGOON
Level select
Hold A after the Sega logo has disappeared and then press B till Gainax is whisked away. Now hold C and press START when the stars come out. A chime will confirm the cheat. During the game, press C to skip the level and B with UP to increase your hit points.

ALTERED BEAST
Infinite continues
Press START and A on the title screen to continue from the last game played.

ARCH RIVALS
Easy scoring
Vinny's the best character. So start with the ball and pass to your team-mate, run straight up the court and press the pass-back button. Run into the corner and shoot and you'll nearly always get a three-pointer.

ARCUS ODYSSEY
Level jump
Enter EEEEEEEEER as the password to start on level five with six reverse dolls.

ARNOLD PALMER GOLF
Super shot
Enter your name as EVE and you will be able to hit the ball great distances.

AYRTON SENNA'S SMGP 2
End password
Use SENNA or CHAMPION as your password to see the end of the game.

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3
Stage select
Pause the game, hold A and press UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT to go forward a level.

BAD OMEN
99 balls
During the title menu press buttons A and C together, then START. The screen switches and you will notice that your ball stock has increased to 99.

BATTLEMANIA
Strange scene
When the Sega logo appears, frantically press START on the second joypad and something weird will happen.

BURNING FORCE
Extra lives
When the title screen disappears, press B, A, B, A, A, C, A, A and START to get ten more lives.

DESERT STRIKE
Extra lives
To add ten lives to your Apache, enter the password BOOOAEZ and any level password.

DRAGON'S FURY
33 balls
Try entering 0956335555 as the password for 33 balls.

DEVILISH
99 balls
On the title screen, hold A, C and LEFT, then press START.

DINOLAND
Test card
When the Wolf Team logo's onscreen, press A, B, C and then START.

DJ BOY
Action replay
Watch the demo when you've completed a game – it's your game over again!

EA HOCKEY
Best shots
Slap shot from the blue line, using LEFT and RIGHT to direct the puck. Close shots are best performed slowly with lots of dribbling directly at the keeper and then pressing C.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN
Level select
Enter PLEASE on the title screen followed by any of these letters: EE, FF, GG, HH, II, KK, OO, QQ, UU, WW or ZZ.

EL VIENTO
Level select
Press START during the game, then UP, LEFT, RIGHT, DOWN and B to jump to the next stage.

ESWAT
Level select
When you complete the game properly, you can go to any level by pressing RIGHT-DOWN and A, B, and C simultaneously on the title screen. Just press START to get the select.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S BOXING
Green goddess
Start a new career and enter your name as The Beast. You'll turn green and have superhuman abilities.

EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER
Password
Enter A6UAA61AA to get in the final.

F-1 CIRCUS
View ending
Choose world championship. Enter your name then press UP-LEFT, B and START.

FAERYTALE ADVENTURE
View ending
Enter your password as:
7R2KUL6RSZXSK6NHGS
DCB720663RI2HO785P

FIRE SHARK
Level select
Go to the level info screen and press A, C, UP and START to enter the round number.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
Infinite continues
Start in two-player mode, then when player one kicks the bucket, just press player two's START button rapidly to get him in the game.

GAIN GROUND
Level select
On the options screen press A, C, B, C.

GAIARES
Invincibility
Start playing then pause the game. Hold LEFT, A and C for a second then continue the game and you should be trouble-free.

GALAHAD
Infinite lives
Type in LTUS as your password then press A, B, C and START to skip levels.

GHOSTBUSTERS
Freaky stairs
You're totally immune to the ghosts while on the stairs.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
Invincibility
Go to the options screen four times. When you get back to the title screen press A, A, A, A, UP, UP, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT and RIGHT. Then hold B and press START to enter the fray unharmed.

GOLDEN AXE
Level select
Hold DOWN-RIGHT, B and START simultaneously on the title screen.

GOLDEN AXE II
Extra credits
Move the cursor to the Options choice on the title screen and press A, B and C simultaneously. Keep them held down until you enter the options screen, then let go of A. Move to the Exit option and press START. Choose one or two players then a normal game by pressing A. Credits should now be eight.

GRANADA
Dopey git
Once you've completed the game, wait till the music's finished and press A. Now your character will fall over – straaaange.

GRANDSLAM TENNIS
Hidden options
Enter CONFIG followed by full stops as your password.

GYNOUG
Level select
Put your cursor on the Control Menu option and hold A, B, C for about ten seconds.

hold A until the game appears and finally release A to initiate invincibility.

INSPECTOR X
Infinite credits
When the continue option comes up after dying, hold DOWN-RIGHT and hammer away at the C button until the credits start to climb.

JAMES POND
Open all exits
Press C, LEFT and START on the title screen. When playing, press A, B and C while rotating the joypad to open the doors on the level.

JAMES POND II: ROBOCOD
Level select
On the title screen press A, C, DOWN, LEFT and START, then before you know it, a level select will be yours.

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS
Extra continues
Wait for the Game Over message to appear then press UP and START together. You can only do this once, so only use it when you've got a chance.

JOHN MADDEN '92
Passwords
0465100 – quarter-finals
0075121 – semi-finals
0475352 – superbowl

KID CHAMELEON
Final guardian
Go to the Lake Woods 2 level. Fight your way to the end and jump onto the last prize block above the exit. Now press DOWN-RIGHT and then press the jump and special attack buttons to warp to Plethora.

KING'S BOUNTY
Password
VRP 06 8TQ
FP3 VE M6N
DG1 ZZ 7B1
MOE 8W CQR
WOA BD EHX
DCE FH Y22
VWJ JL MF6

KLAX
Special gems
On the title screen, hold LEFT-UP, A, B, C and START for a special game.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE
Open all doors
Enter SMAIILIW as the password.

LAKERS VS CELTICS
Password
3L2GJS – LA Lakers vs Philadelphia 76ers

LEMMINGS
Sunsoft passwords
Level 25 – FCOBU
Level 30 – DJHPI

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER
Passwords
Plain Aria – CQIERDG
Domino Mirror – CSIEIYE
Freedom Train – CSIEAZE

A-Z of tips

LOTUS CHALLENGE
Passwords
SLUGFACE – infinite turbos
MANSELL – invulnerable

M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK
Unlimited ammo and invincibility
Wait for the demo screen, then press B, B, C, B, C, C, C, B, C, B, B, C and START.

MARVEL LAND
Password
TRIDENT – last section

MASTER OF MONSTERS
End sequence
Press A, B, C and START on the sound test screen.

MERCS
Tougher game
Go to Commando mode and press A, B, C at the same time, then press START while holding the buttons. Enemies will now be faster and more intelligent.

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE
Level skip
On the title screen, hold C then press START. During play, pause the game then press A to skip a level.

MOONWALKER
Level select
Hold UP-LEFT and A on the second controller, then press START on the first controller and select a one-player game.

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY
Increase credits
While the demo is playing, rotate the controller clockwise a few times. You should now have nine credits when you play the game.

ONSLAUGHT
Password
Enter zeros as your password to complete everything but the easy mountainous section.

OUTLANDER
Passwords
Level 3 – P69H0SK7YCKCX
Level 4 – TZZY2159Q9YK80

OUT RUN
Hyper mode
Press C ten times on the title screen, then go to the options screen and choose the new option.

PHANTASY STAR 2
Enhanced life
Keep pressing B and C while you're walking along to open secret temple to get the four gold chests.

ROAD RASH
Password
B0000 04RD0 11CAF 56C7B – level five, Panda, $26,230

ROAD RASH 2
Password
0H4R 550H – level five, Diablo, $20,000

ROLO TO THE RESCUE
Secret menu
On the title screen hold UP-LEFT, A and C, then press RESET. Keep holding them for a few more seconds and press B for a cheat menu.

ROLLING THUNDER 2
Password
Level 11 – A Private Thunder Created the Powder

SAINT SWORD
Password
Level six – TAITOZ

SD VALIS
Invincibility
On the title screen press UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, A, B, UP, DOWN and START.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
Infinite energy
Complete a game and enter your name as ZQX. Then hold A, B, C and START. During a game, your energy will still countdown, but will reset to 12 when it reaches zero.

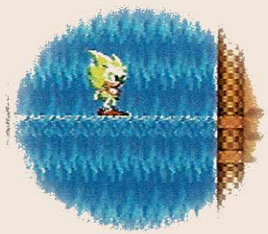
SHINING FORCE
Forbidden box
Hold UP and START on the second joypad then turn the machine on. During the Sega screen, hold A and START on player one's pad, and A and C on the second pad. Start on any stage and you'll have the forbidden box, which raises your party's level to 19 if used.

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS
Gold spree
Obtain a magic item that will become redundant after one use then take it to the shop to be repaired. Make sure you have less money than the repair costs, then go to sleep for one night, return to the shop in the morning and you will have tons of gold coins.

SMASH TV

STREETS OF RAGE
Level select
Hold DOWN on player two's pad and press A, B and C then enter the options screen using player one's pad.

STREETS OF RAGE II
Extra continues
If you are about to die on player one, plug in the second controller and press START to begin with a fresh character.



STRIDER
Level select
While the master laughs away to himself at the beginning of the level, hold DOWN and press A, C, B, C and A.

SWORD OF SODAN
Level skip
Get four potions and gulp them all at once to jump forward a level.

SUPER FANTASY ZONE
Level skip
Connect two joypads to the machine. Pause the game with the first joypad. Press B on the second pad whilst holding DOWN-LEFT and START. "Pass" should appear onscreen so press C on the first pad to jump forward a level.

SUPER HANG-ON
Password
5FF3F546F35564
FF0SLPIMFJQNKS – end sequence

SUPER LEAGUE
Password
JORQWVVRROOQSHPQGUDEAM – four-game lead

SUPER MONACO GP
Lose your head
Get in the top three in a wet race and keep A, B and C pressed as you cross the finish line. Then just wait for the prize-giving scene.

SUPER THUNDERBLADE
Level select
On the title screen, press A, UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, LEFT, DOWN and UP. Then press UP and START together.

SWORD OF VERMILLION
Test mode
To listen to the music, press A, B, C and START together on the title screen using the second controller.

TASK FORCE HARRIER EX
unpause and the bomb will increase in power.

TURRICAN
Infinite everything!
On the options screen, place the cursor on exit and hold DOWN while pressing A, B, B, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A.

TWIN COBRA
Level select
On the title screen press UP, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT and START.

TWO CRUDE DUDES
Extra continues
On your last life, press START on player two's pad to bring in the second character.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER
Passwords
Level six – JDRSD
Level 11 – BYTCM

VALIS 3
Sound test
On the title screen, hold UP-LEFT, A, B, C and START.

VERYTEX
Infinite lives
Pause the game while holding A, B and C. Press DOWN and START for an extra life.

WANI WANI WORLD
Infinite lives
When the Sega logo appears, reset twice and four question marks will appear instead of lives.

WARRIOR OF ROME
Password
GREBDQ3QNE – end sequence

WHERE IN THE WORLD...?
Password
MJDFPDG – Capture Carmen

WRESTLEBALL
Extra teams
On the team select screen, hold B and keep pressing DOWN for four more teams.

XENON 2
Infinite lives
Play a game good enough to get on the scoreboard, then enter OLD as your name. Do the same but get a score directly below it and enter AGE. Also try ARM and OUR.

ZOOM!
Extra options
While selecting your player, press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, A, B. Enter it slowly but surely. Play the game and the new options will appear on the menu.

and close the menu. A flaw in game means monsters will rarely attack you now.

PHELIOS
Extra continues
On the Chapter One screen, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A for six continues.

PIT-FIGHTER
Extra continues
Get to level eight with one-player then pause the game and plug in the second controller. Unpause the game and press START on the second controller. Select your fighter and you will start with three continues. Now just beat up your former fighter and continue on through the game.

POPULOUS
Level select
Just type in the level you require, followed by BIT. For example, use the password 480BIT to get to level 480.

POWERBALL
Best team
Press B, B, C, B, B, C on the title screen.

POWERMONGER
Password
Final level – TJSDP2TJW7TI5PJ3DJ4PJLIKPHAKJEKOGQ

PREDATOR 2
Passwords
Level 4 – LOS ANGELES
Level 5 – TOTAL BODY

PRO BASEBALL SUPER LEAGUE 91
Beat everyone!
Go to the player change screen when you are fielding and press C. Answer yes to forget the match and you, strangely, win 1-0. It only works while you're fielding.

QUACKSHOT
Extra lives
Top up your lives by repeating this over and over again. Get to the Viking ship and go up the mast in the lift, collecting all the money bags. Walk right and follow the path down to the extra life. Now exit the screen, then re-enter it to see the reappearance of the extra life.

RAINBOW ISLANDS
Full complement
To get all the power-ups, on the title screen press UP, B, DOWN, LEFT, C, A, A, B and C.

RAMBO 3
Full complement
Fight to the two firing walls on level three. Destroy all bar one of the cannons, then put the yellow icon on the dagger and go to the bottom of the screen. Stab the man in camouflage and collect what he leaves behind. Repeat this to top up on everything.

THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI
Infinite shurikens
Select zero shurikens on the options screen and leave the game for 40 seconds. The zero will then turn into an infinity sign (∞).

RINGS OF POWER
Money top-up
Get to 32', 2" – 6', 6" and you can constantly re-enter the

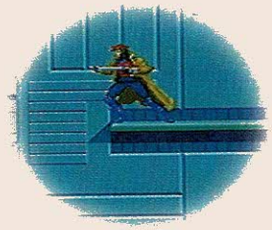
Level skip
On the title screen, press UP, DOWN, UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT and LEFT to leap to Mutoid man.

SOL-FEACE
Stage select
On the title screen, press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A and START. Go to the config level and put the cursor on Start. Choose the level number from here. During a game, press A, B and C simultaneously to skip a level.

SONIC
Level select
This is notoriously difficult to enter so do persevere because it does work. On the title screen (when Sonic's wagging his finger), push UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, A, C, B and C. You should hear a small noise if it's worked. Then press A and START simultaneously to enter the special options screen.

SONIC 2
Level select
Go to the sound test option and play sounds 19, 65, 09 and 17. Now press RESET and hold A and START.

SPACE HARRIER 2
Level select
While the space sequence is playing, press A, B and C together and move the joypad LEFT or RIGHT to choose a stage.

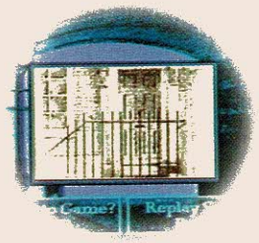


SPACE INVADERS 90
Level select
Press A, C and START together on the title screen. When the screen goes black, press B, A and C.

SPEEDBALL 2
Password
Division one: LCLI CWAF OBXE ya3q 2bst -isl gGVC

SPIDER-MAN
Shortcut
On level one, get to the wall of boxes past the dog. Jump up to the second row and crawl to the right. You will pass through the wall and end up at the forklift.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
Password
Level 8 – EDK VEI IAL LDL



STEEL EMPIRE
Level select
Go to the sound select option and play sounds 01, 01, 09 and 02.

STORMLORD
Reset clock
Pause the game and press B, A, A, A, C, UP, UP, UP, A, A, A.

STREET SMART
Extra lives
Reset quickly about 12 times, then choose options from the menu. Move the cursor to the sound test and press DOWN, DOWN, DOWN and A.

Secret options
Hold A and turn on the Mega Drive. Now press UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, A, B, A, C, and B before the title stops. There are now new choices on the options screen. If you pause the game while playing, you can skip a level by pressing A, or initiate slow motion by pressing B quickly.

TAZ-MANIA
Level select
Plug in two controllers. On the intro screen hold A, B and C on both pads then press START on both. You'll hear a chime, then start the game. Pause the game, then press B and C on the first pad to bring up the level select.

TECHNOCOP
Full energy
Pause the game and press C ten times, A five times, B twice and A ten times.

TERMINATOR 2
Level skip
When you see "Press start" at the beginning, press UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT in sequence three times. You'll soon know if you've done it properly! During the game press B and C together to jump to the end of the level.

TEST DRIVE 2
Secret options
Start driving and press A, B, and C together to adjust the car's parameters.

THUNDERFORCE III
Full power-ups
Pause the game then press UP ten times, DOWN, B, DOWN, B, DOWN, B. Get all the weapons by pressing B and A.

THUNDER PRO WRESTLING
Extra continues
When Game Over appears, press UP and C.

TMNT
Level select
When the Konami logo appears, press C, B, B, A, A, A, B, C. On the title screen press A, B, B, C, C, C, B, A.

TOEJAM & EARL
Secret level
On the first level, drop through the hole in the island to land on level zero. Have a bath and drink some lemonade. Jump off this level to zoom up to the highest level.

TROUBLE SHOOTER
Level select
Plug in two controllers. On the title screen, press START, RIGHT and C simultaneously on the second pad. On the new screen, press START, RIGHT and C to increase the level number.

TRUXTON
Power bomb
Set off a skull explosion then pause the game while the explosion's in mid-flow. Wait about 15 seconds then

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT
Secret game
Enter your name as AZY and highlight mission BHA. Enter AZY and you will start to play *Black Ball Assault*! (Try entering your name as BIGNET and press START while fighting an opponent...)

CHUCK ROCK
Password
Level five – TSFVNP

COBRA COMMAND
Level select
On the title screen, press LEFT, RIGHT, A, B and C. Now press LEFT or RIGHT to change level.

EARNEST EVANS
Level skip
Pause the game and press UP, A, DOWN, B, LEFT, A, RIGHT, B. Now unpause.

HEAVY NOVA
Hidden bonus
In versus mode, if you manage to kill a guardian without losing any energy you'll get one million points! The same technique might work with your bank manager.

HOOK
99 lives
Drop to the bottom of the first pit in the caves on level five. Walk right and swim under the rocks to the leaf and 3-up. Pick them up then kill yourself. Just repeat the technique, killing yourslef each time, to top up your lives to the maximum.

NOSTALGIA 1907
Skip intro
Turn on and when "SEGA" appears, press and hold button C till "Sur De Wave" appears. That boring intro will now be ancient history.

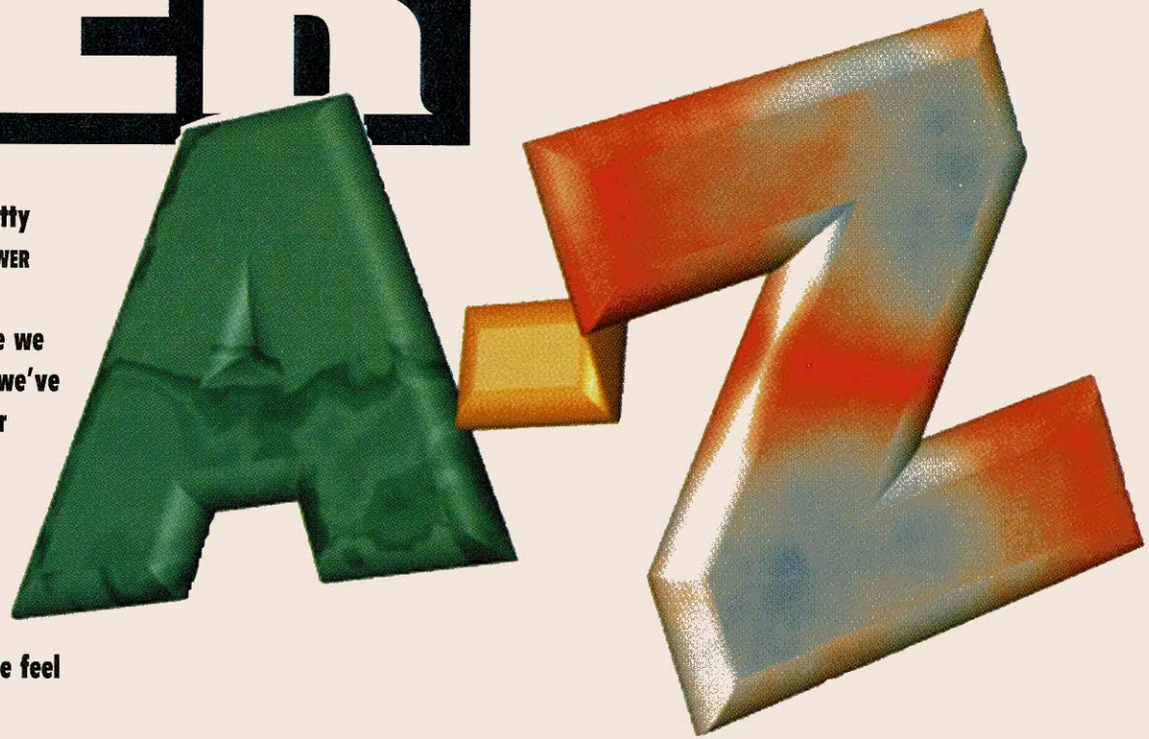
ROAD AVENGER
Level select
From the start, push UP to access the options screen. Once there, press A six times. Now just play the game as usual.

SOL-FEACE
Extra options
On the title screen, press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A. Press START when you hear a sound effect. In Config Mode you'll now find Start and Mode. Go to Start and choose the start level with LEFT and RIGHT. Mode allows you to adjust the difficulty of the game, again with LEFT and RIGHT. If you press RIGHT a few times whilst holding A, you'll get "muteki", invincibility!

TIME GAL
Passwords
LANDMINE – 1991AD
RECKLESS – 2001AD
MURDERER – 3001AD

WONDER DOG
Passwords
REEVES – Planet Weird
PIXIES – Planet Foggia
WOOPIE – Planet Kninus

POWER A-Z



Yep, here it is, the first Power A–Z. Unlike other A–Zs... well, no, actually it's pretty like other A–Zs, but of course there are the subtle differences that make MEGA POWER what it is.

First off, in the Power A–Z you'll find a listing of every single Mega Drive game we have discovered – regardless of its origin. If the game isn't officially available, we've written import in the price column. Obviously, as the months go by, we'll discover more and more information, like the Japanese producer, or perhaps info on the official release details. All games are listed under the English names, with the Japanese or American game name mentioned where necessary in the small synopsis for each game.

Finally, we've given each game a rating out of ten. These are not necessarily the same as those in the original MEGA POWER review, but generally reflect what we feel the game deserves when we are compiling the A–Z each month.

title	producer	price	comment	rating
B43		Import	Aircraft shoot-'em-up. Very dated but good, simple fun.	6
688 ATTACK SUB	Sega	£39.99	Difficult submarine simulation, hard to play but the effort is worth it.	7
ADVANCED WW2 SIMULATOR		Import	Another difficult game, unfortunately you'll need a strong command of Japanese.	7
AERO BLASTER		Import	Too short and easy shoot-'em-up, two-player is fun though.	6
AFTER BURNER II	Sega	£34.99	Very accurate reproduction of the coin-op, but too easy	5
AIR DIVER		Import	Quite similar to *After Burner II*, but has more challenging gameplay and tougher guardians.	8
ALESTE (MUSHA)		Import	Very amusing shoot-'em-up. Detailed graphics, but a tad too easy.	8
ALEX KIDD IN ENCHANTED CASTLE	Sega	£29.99	Platform adventure that is packed with levels but becomes slightly tedious.	6
ALIEN^3	Flying Edge	£39.99	Good graphics and sound on this basic shoot-'em-up, but poor playability.	7
ALIEN STORM	Sega	£34.99	Another shoot-'em-up that is far too easy; the two-player option saves it.	6
ALISIA DRAGOON	Sega	£39.95	Help this babe through eight stages of tough guardians and few lives.	8
ALTERED BEAST	Sega	£34.99	The graphics are flickery and response slow. Don't rush out to buy it.	4
AMBITION OF CAESAR		Import	Dedicated to fans of strategy games, graphics are excellent.	7
AMERICAN GLADIATORS	Gametek	Import	The game from the crap TV programme; six events to pound through. Monotonous.	5
ANOTHER WORLD	Virgin	£39.99	Revolutionary animation, brilliantly detailed graphics and addictive gameplay.	9
AQUATIC GAMES	Electronic Arts	£39.99	James Pond competes in a series of fun sports. Great gameplay and graphics.	8
ARCH RIVALS	Flying Edge	£34.99	Manic basketball extravaganza. Keeps you enthralled for a few hours but soon wears off.	7
ARCUS ODYSSEY		Import	RPG in the style of *Gauntlet*. A much-needed password save makes this slightly easier.	9
ARIEL: THE LITTLE MERMAID	Sega	£39.99	Become either Ariel or Triton to defeat the forces of darkness. Plenty of vicious sharks.	7
ARNOLD PALMER TOUR GOLF	Sega	£34.99	Up against all the competition, this still proves to be an enjoyable simulation.	8
ARROW FLASH	Sega	£34.99	Very poor shoot-'em-up, grim graphics and sound. All round embarrassment.	2
ART ALIVE	Sega	£29.99	Art package that encourages you to draw on the MD, but you can't save it!	3
ASSAULT-SUIT-LEYNOS		Import	You are a robot who has to bash other robots. Innovative, but not much fun.	4
ATOMIC ROBOKID		Import	Scrolling shoot-'em-up, that's total rubbish.	3
ATOMIC RUNNER	Sega	£39.99	Impressive graphics and sound FX make this a good solid platform shoot-'em-up.	7
AXIS		Import	Worth seeing for the amazing 3-D graphics. Very addictive shoot-'em-up.	7

title	producer	price	comment	rating
F-1 GRAND PRIX		Import	Great sound FX and graphics with pukka visuals.	8
F-22 INTERCEPTOR	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Arcadey sim where you have to shoot at Iraq. See Saddam cry!	8
THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Fans of RPGs will love it; very accessible and ideal for newcomers.	8
FANTASIA	Sega	£39.99	Tough with great graphics, let down badly by the gameplay which is very annoying.	5
FATAL FURY	Sega	£44.99	*Street Fighter II* clone with varied moves but pretty dull.	6
FASTEST 1		Import	Split screen two-player racing – but that's about it.	4
FATAL LABYRINTH		Import	Far too easy for the experienced adventurer; good for novices.	6
FATAL REWIND	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Conversion of The Killing Game Show. Strong platformer with superb graphics.	7
FATMAN		Import	Punch-'em-up with comical characters parading across the screen.	6
FERRARI GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE	Flying Edge	£39.99	One of the worst racing games available. The ear-splitting sound doesn't help.	3
FIGHTING MASTERS		Import	Great visuals, atrocious game. Only for beat-'em-up wimps.	2
FINAL BLOW		Import	Boxing game that again looks great, but don't be fooled.	3
FIRE MUSTANG		Import	A WW2 shoot-'em-up that doesn't work. Large graphics enhance the slow pace of the game.	5
FIRE SHARK	Sega	£34.99	Fun shoot-'em-up with everything except challenge. Good graphics and tricky opponents.	7
FLICKY	Sega	£29.99	Tiny sprites, simple backgrounds and awful gameplay make this simply appalling.	2
FORGOTTEN WORLDS	Sega	£34.99	Shoot-'em-up with long stages and varied enemies. Tough but enjoyable.	7
G-LOC	Sega	£39.99	Almost identical to the arcade version. Take to the skies and blast away.	8
GADGET TWINS	Imagitec	£39.99	Action packed and very funny platformer. Brilliant graphics and wonderful cartoon FX.	9
GAIARES	Sega	£34.99	Impressive shoot-'em-up which will keep all blast fans happy.	8
GAIN GROUND	Sega	£34.99	Two-player game where you have to jump and shoot your way through a massive landscape.	8
GALAXY FORCE II	Sega	£39.99	So bad, it's unbelievable...	1
GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING	Acclaim	£39.99	Poor attempt that does nothing whatsoever to Acclaim's reputation.	5
GHOSTBUSTERS	Sega	£34.99	All the characters have been turned into Japanese mutants with large heads.	2
GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS	Sega	£44.99	Expensive but great arcade adventure that has already become a classic.	9
GLOBAL GLADIATORS	Virgin	£39.99	Wonderful platform game where you fire custard at slime monsters and collect McDonald's arches.	9
GODS	Renegade	Import	Not released here yet, but stunning graphics with authentic and powerful backgrounds.	9

BACK TO THE FUTURE III	Imageworks	£39.99	Massive let down, don't even think of testing it.	1
BAD OMEN		Import	Break-Out clone, which is actually pretty good.	7
BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS	Flying Edge	£39.99	Fantastic everything in this game – even tons of challenge.	9
BATMAN	Sega	£39.99	Fine conversion. It may get a tad boring, but accurate graphics hold things together.	8
BATMAN RETURNS	Sega	£39.99	A good sequel that proves very difficult. Five levels of hair-pulling frustration	7
BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER		Import	Better than all the other Sega versions, with large sprites and detailed backdrops	8
BATTLE GOLFER		Import	About the exploits of a golf ball and its travels. Sounds dodgy but it's good.	7
BATTLE SQUADRON	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Very tough shoot-'em-up, which is both challenging and looks great.	8
BEAST WARRIORS		Import	Don't be fooled by the pretty pictures, there's nothing nice about this game.	2
BIMINI RUN		Import	Outer-space shoot-'em-up that fails to impress. Funny but that's it.	5
BIO-HAZARD BATTLE	Sega	£39.99	High difficulty setting that is very colourful but lacks gameplay.	6
BIO SHIP: PALADIN		Import	Two-player shoot-'em-up with cool sound, but it's pretty easy.	5
BLOCK-OUT	Electronic Arts	£34.99	*Tetris* goes 3-D as you attempt to fit the blocks into a well. Very challenging.	7
BONANZA BROS	Sega	£34.99	Option of a two-player mode which makes it more fun but still too easy.	5
BUCK ROGERS	Electronic Arts	£49.99	Hugely challenging RPG with tons to do and difficulty set just right.	9
BUDOKHAN	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Good presentation, but it's another shallow beat-'em-up with limited moves.	5
BULLS VS LAKERS	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Re-live the 1991 NBA finals in this basketball sim. For die-hard fans only.	8
BURNING FORCE		Import	Awful beat-'em-up that isn't worth writing about.	1
CADASH		Import	Japanese arcade adventure. Fun to play with bright sprites and detailed backgrounds.	7
CALIBRE .50		Import	Vertical shoot-'em-up that is very mediocre.	3
CALIFORNIA GAMES	Sega	£39.99	Cool sports but rushed game. One for Surfers Steves only.	6
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE AVENGERS	Sega	£34.99	Poor beat-'em-up worth playing in two-player mode only.	3
CASTLE OF ILLUSION	Sega	£39.99	A classic game. Great everything on this wonderful platform extravaganza.	9
CENTURION	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Historical strategy with excellent in-game maps. Unfortunately, the storyline is dodgy.	7
CHAKAN	Sega	£39.99	Taken from the comic book series. Creative graphics and music enhance this, but lacking in gameplay.	7
CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM		Import	Racing game with good view of the track. Very appealing with great graphics and soundtrack.	7
CHIKI CHIKI BOYS	Sega	£34.99	This platform adventure offers very little, but younger players will enjoy it.	5
CHUCK ROCK	Virgin	£39.99	Stone Age palaver in this arcade adventure. Very funny and challenging.	8
CLUE		Import	Basically this is Cluedo on the MD. Not bad, but we'd rather buy the board game.	7
COOL SPOT	Virgin	£39.99	Original, fun and super cool. It's also very difficult and will keep you playing for ages.	9
COLUMNS	Sega	£29.99	Brilliant puzzle game, which will keep you totally hooked.	9
CORPORATION	Virgin	£39.99	A strange creature escapes from the labs. You have to kill the mutant and infiltrate the corporation.	9
CRACKDOWN	Sega	£39.99	Shoot everything that moves. Detailed graphics and addictive gameplay.	8
CRÜE BALL	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Fast and furious pinball sim, with ten tables and Motley Crüe music.	6
CURSE		Import	The worst game ever?	0
CYBERBALL	Sega	£34.99	Futuristic American football, with metal monsters, inaccurate graphics let it down.	5
DANGEROUS SEED		Import	12 levels of shooting away alien plant life. Makes for a novel and lengthy game.	8
DARIUS II		Import	Another 12-level shoot-'em-up, you can do the levels in any order.	8
DARK CASTLE	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Soundtrack saves this tedious offering. Poor animation and graphics.	4
DARWIN 4081	Import		Yet again you shoot aliens – not exactly 2010 philosophy, is it?	8
DAVE ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT	Sega	£39.99	Excellent sports simulation. Unfortunately the players aren't the real McCoy.	8
DEADLY MOVES		Import	Street Fighter II clone that lacks depth as each wrestler has limited moves and only one special attack.	7
DEATH DUEL	Razorsoft	Import	Repetitive shoot-'em-up that is very tough but lacks everything else.	6
DECAPATTACK	Sega	£34.99	Gory killings from a gruesome head-chucking main character. Big and very playable.	8
DESERT STRIKE	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Prequel to Jungle Strike, with great graphics and sound, but not enough levels.	8
DEVILISH		Import	Similar to *Break-Out*, but with better graphics. Addictive bash-'em-down fun.	8
DICK TRACY	Sega	£34.99	Loads of neat cartoon statics and a decent attempt at character sprites, but lacks originality.	5
DINOLAND		Import	*Devil Crash* on a diet. Simple gameplay and poor scrolling.	3
DJ BOY		Import	Quite original, a beat-'em-up on roller skates, but again it's too easy.	5
DOUBLE DRAGON	Ballistic	£29.99	Arcade-style, two-player beat-'em-up. Much better than the sequel.	7
DOUBLE DRAGON II		Import	Flickery graphics, slow characters and tiresome gameplay.	7
DOUBLE DRAGON III	Flying Edge	£39.99	They should have stopped at the first one.	2
DRAGON'S FURY	Domark	£39.99	Official release of *Devil Crush*. Very addictive game that has superb graphics and sound.	3
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS	Sega	£39.99	Superb graphics on this RPG and unlimited challenge make this a must.	8
DYNAMITE DUKE	Sega	£34.99	Loads of punks to mow down if you like that sort of thing. Far too easy.	8
EARNEST EVANS		Import	Guide your intrepid explorer through countless scenarios in this colourful adventure.	8
EA HOCKEY	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Prequel to *NHLPA Hockey*. Lots of gameplay, without all the intricacies.	6
ECCO	Sega	£39.99	If you like dolphins, you'll love this. *Hugely* original with stunning graphics and sound.	7
ELEMENTAL MASTER		Import	Shoot-'em-up where you've seen it all before. Gameplay is addictive and involving.	9
EL VIENTO		Import	Looks great and plays as well. Brilliant manga animation and statics.	9
ESWAT	Sega	£34.99	Parallax, multi-directional scrolling gives the impression of a huge game. Challenging and addictive.	7
EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER	Virgin	£39.99	First decent soccer sim. Moves are convincing and creates a believable atmosphere.	8
EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S BOXING	Sega	£39.99	Well defined sprites and challenging gameplay make this an impressive sim.	8
EXILE		Import	A strange mixture of RPG, platform and puzzle makes *Exile* an intriguing game to play.	8
EX-MUTANTS	Sega	£34.99	Save the population from extinction in the aftermath of WW3. Let down by the gameplay.	6
F-1 CIRCUS		Import	*F-1 Circus* is one of the best arcade driving sims yet. Plenty of courses, plenty of gameplay.	8

GOLDEN AXE	Sega	£34.99	Great arcade game for its time but now looks terribly dated.	7
GOLDEN AXE II	Sega	£39.99	Easier than the original, it contains loads of new creatures and some good story screens.	7
GRANADA X	Sega	£29.99	Control a 20-tonne tank to rescue a kidnapped girl. Very addictive.	8
GRANDSLAM TENNIS	Sega	£39.99	Plain tennis game which offers nothing new.	5
GREENDOG	Sega	£39.99	Greendog is one cool Steve-dude. Guide him through wild lands on this well-animated platformer.	8
GREY LANCER		Import	Ultra-fast scrolling shoot-'em-up with a great soundtrack and superb gameplay.	9
GYNOUG	Sega	£34.99	Nasty guardians and good gameplay make this worth looking at.	7
HARDBALL	Accolade	£34.99	Baseball sim that looks good but offers nothing.	3
HARDBALL III	Accolade	£39.99	Will keep fans happy with great gameplay and excellent graphics.	8
HARD DRIVIN'	Tengen	£39.99	Two levels limit this well-executed driving sim.	7
HEAVY NOVA		Import	Robots beat each other up, boring.	3
HEAVY UNIT		Import	Best thing on this shoot-'em-up is that you can change the shape of your ship.	6
HELLFIRE	Sega	£34.99	Weird wacky shoot-'em-up that has a loyal following.	8
HERZOG ZWEI	Sega	£34.99	Strategy and arcade combined, where you fight tanks. Odd name, eh?	6
HOME ALONE	Sega	£39.99	Spin-off from the movie: poor graphics and sound, with dodgy gameplay	4
HUMANS	Imagitec	£34.99	Puzzle game in which humans are controlled to clear levels. Good graphics and sound.	8
IMMORTAL, THE	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Tough puzzler with brilliant visuals. There are 20 different gory death sequences.	8
INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE	US Gold	£39.99	Platformer that follows the film well, but short and easy levels.	6
INSECTOR X		Import	Superb shoot-'em-up, where graphics, sound and gameplay are brilliant.	9
ISHIDO: THE WAY OF THE STONES	Accolade	£34.99	Boardgame based on *Shanghai*. Okay but boardgame conversions at dodgy.	6
JAMES BOND - THE DUEL	Domark	£39.99	Neat animation and flawless graphics are helped by spot-on FX.	8
JAMES POND	Electronic Arts	£39.99	First MD game to be programmed solely in the UK. Quite bland but very playable.	6
JAMES POND II	Electronic Arts	£39.99	The graphics are very slick, the gameplay is challenging and overall very funny.	9
JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS	Sega	£34.99	Another plain tennis game, very basic all round.	4
JEWEL MASTER	Sega	£34.99	Initially impressive but far too repetitive.	6
JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL	Sega	£34.99	Not even Joe Montana can save this boring American football game.	4
JOE MONTANA II	Sega	£34.99	Real-speech commentary helps the sequel, but still needs work in game department.	6
JOE MONTANA III	Sega	£34.99	It just gets better and better, retaining all the good things from the previous games.	8
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL	Electronic Arts	£39.99	The original game that started the trend. Intelligent play, but simple moves.	7
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL 92	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Updated graphics and sound make this a worthy upgrade.	8
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL 93	Electronic Arts	£39.99	More of stats update for die-hard fans, and folks who haven't got the others.	8
JORDAN VS BIRD	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Average basketball game that unfortunately lacks depth.	5
JUNCTION		Import	By mixing a *Pipe Mania*-type game with a slide puzzle the result is a very challenging foray.	8
KABUKI SOLDIER		Import	Beat-'em-up featuring sumo wrestlers – not bad.	6
KA-GE-KI		Import	Also known as Fists of Steel. Grim, grim, ultra-grim.	3
KID CHAMELEON	Sega	£39.99	The kid must venture everywhere to save his mates in a constantly changing game.	8
KING COLOSSUS	Sega	Import	Japanese adventure game. Nine levels of adventuring.	4
KING'S BOUNTY	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Rather boring RPG with huge amounts of bland landscape to cover.	6
KING SALMON		Import	Fishing sim with Japanese text. Sounds quite naff but is actually very addictive.	8!
KLAX	Domark	£39.99	Excellent but infuriating puzzle with constantly changing graphics.	8
KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE	Flying Edge	£39.95	The Simpsons make an appearance, but a simple puzzle game really.	6
LANDSTALKER	Sega	Import	In Japanese but great adventure game with tremendous graphics.	8
LAKERS VS CELTICS	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Incredibly realistic, with all the players from that season. Basketball fans only.	7
LAST BATTLE	Sega	£34.99	Disappointing beat-'em-up with slow, boring gameplay.	5
THE LEGEND OF GALAHAD	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Average platform with an element of RPG.	6
LEMMINGS	Sega	£39.99	One of the finest puzzle games on cart. Extremely addictive.	9
LHX ATTACK CHOPPER	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Helicopter sim that isn't original, but will appeal to war junkies.	6
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Very good racing game, enhanced by speed, superb graphics and split screen.	8
M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK	Sega	£39.99	If you like tanks then you won't be disappointed here. Lots of trundling around aimlessly.	7
MARBLE MADNESS	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Replica of the arcade classic which is still brilliant, but limited.	7
MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY	Sega	£39.99	Viewing the match from the side fails dismally, making it very hard to work out moves.	6
MARVEL LAND		Import	Platform adventure which will test your reactions and skill. *Marvel*lous graphics.	8
MASTER OF MONSTERS		Import	Boring strategy where only the monsters win.	1
MASTER OF WEAPON		Import	Scrolling shoot-'em-up which is very fast but over too quickly.	7
MEGA-LO-MANIA	Virgin	£39.99	Brilliant gameplay and very challenging. Requires a lot of thought!	8
MEGAPANEL		Import	Tetris, but better presented. Interesting graphics and varied gameplay.	8
MEGA TRAX		Import	4x4 beach racer that doesn't live up to expectations.	4
MERCS	Sega	£39.99	Identical to the arcade, beefy sounds and graphics.	7
MICRO MACHINES	Codemasters	£39.99	Race your miniature car around the breakfast table. Stupid but brilliant.	9
MIDNIGHT MADNESS		Import	Average coin-op conversion which fails to impress.	4
MIGHT & MAGIC	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Popular RPG which grows on you the more you play it.	8
MIKE DITKA FOOTBALL	Ballistic	£34.99	Similar to *John Madden* but without the character – still good, though.	8
MONOPOLY		Import	Fair representation of the game with good animation. But why buy it instead of the boardgame?	6
MONSTER HUNTER		Import	Controlling a sword-wielding young lass may appeal, but it becomes very tedious.	4
MOONWALKER	Sega	£34.99	Save Michael's captured children (if you must). Detailed graphics, smooth animation and great sound.	8
MS PACMAN		Import	Much worse than the arcade version. Should have *packed* her bags and given up by now.	2

POWER A-Z

title	producer	price	comment	rating
NHLPA HOCKEY	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Simply one of the best sports simulations you can slam into your machine. Super fast, super real.	9
NINJA BURAI		Import	RPG that requires an understanding of Japanese.	7
OLYMPIC GOLD	US Gold	£39.99	Good simulation that is best played with two or more players.	8
ONSLAUGHT	Ballistic	Import	Medieval platform beat-'em-up that comes highly recommended.	8
OUTLANDER		Import	Drive 'n' blast game that will please anyone who fancies themselves as Mad Max .	6
OUT RUN	Sega	£39.99	Arcade conversion that is very similar and still great fun even now.	7
OUTRUN 2019	Sega	£39.99	Set in the future, on a par with *Out Run*.	8
PAC-MANIA	Domark	£34.99	The graphics are excellent which makes the whole thing a joy to play.	8
PAPERBOY	Domark	£39.99	Lots of new streets and even more hazards, but lacks two-player mode.	6
PAPERBOY 2	Domark	£39.99	Still no two-player mode, and pretty much the same but slightly bigger.	7
PGA TOUR GOLF	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Better than *Arnold Palmer* with four courses and great graphics.	8
PGA TOUR GOLF II	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Fantastic follow-up to PGA, with more courses and bigger, better challenge.	9
PHANTASY SOLDIER 3	Sega	Import	Quality platform adventure with excellent graphics and even better gameplay.	9
PHANTASY STAR II	Sega	£59.99	Mammoth RPG which is fairly easy to get into, but still very tough – and steep!	8
PHANTASY STAR III	Sega	£49.99	Ten quid cheaper than the original with improved graphics. But the sound is still very weak.	8
PHELIOS	Sega	£34.99	Very average shoot-'em-up, which you'll probably finish the day you get it.	6
PIGSKIN FOOTBRAWL		Import	Much more violent than American football which it's loosely based on. Also has two-player mode.	7
PIT-FIGHTER	Domark	£49.99	Digitized graphics and gut-wrenching sounds enhance the experience of battering someone to death.	8
POPULOUS	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Certainly isn't an action game, yet the strategy isn't complex enough.	6
POWERBALL		Import	A cross between wrestling, martial arts and soccer. Innovative but poorly executed.	7
POWERMONGER	Electronic Arts	£39.99	A land mission has to be undertaken, unfortunately the graphics and sound let it down.	7
PREDATOR 2	Flying Edge	£34.99	Seven stages of futuristic street violence with plenty of hostage rescuing to be done.	8
PRO QUARTERBACK		Import	Ardent sports fans will enjoy it, but it is totally unoriginal.	7
QUACKSHOT	Sega	£39.99	Splendid Disney game with Donald starring in a superb platform adventure.	9
QUAD CHALLENGE		Import	Four-wheeler buggies racing around a race track. Utterly useless.	2
RAIDEN TRAD		Import	More shoot-'em-up fare from the Far East. Nothing new but quite challenging.	6
RAINBOW ISLANDS		Import	Two games in one on this brilliant platformer. Totally addictive gameplay and awesome tunes.	9
RAMBO III	Sega	£29.99	Shoot the annoying inhabitants of a forest sounds boring, doesn't it. Well, it is.	5
RASTAN SAGA 2		Import	Guide your gallant hero through a maze of dangly platforms. Poor gameplay, decent graphics.	5
RBI 3 BASEBALL		Import	Baseball sim without a difference. Screens full of stats and difficult batting motion.	6
RBI 4 BASEBALL		Import	Hitting the ball is hard enough. Once you've done this, you'll discover the outfield to be totally bland.	6
REVENGE OF SHINOBI, THE	Sega	£34.99	Considered to be one of the best beat-'em-up games, and rightly so.	8
RINGSIDE ANGEL		Import	Sluggish gameplay ruins this women's wrestling game. Good inlay, though.	6
RINGS OF POWER	Electronic Arts	£49.95	Colourful, extremely large and exceedingly difficult. Brilliant nonetheless.	9
RISKY WOODS	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Varied backgrounds and atmospheric music make this fun to play.	7
ROAD BLASTERS		Import	Converted from the coin-op, but unfortunately it is dismally poor.	3
ROAD RASH	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Race a motorbike through the countryside, overtaking or clubbing other competitors. Great fun.	9
ROAD RASH II	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Virtually the same as the first but with the added bonus of two-player split screen.	9
ROLLING THUNDER 2	Sega	£39.99	Encounter hoods, panthers and 18-wheel juggernauts. How *James Bond* should have been.	8
RUNARK		Import	Save the world's wildlife in this Indy-style adventure beat-'em-up. Untapped potential.	5
SAINT SWORD		Import	You've guessed it: a man with a sword, boring graphics and crap animation.	5
SD VALIS		Import	Sad Japanese arcade adventure with very little content to keep you playing.	3
SHADOW BLASTERS		Import	A beat-'em-up which fails to impress; poor graphics and virtually non-existent gameplay.	4
SHADOW DANCER	Sega	£39.99	In this beat-'em-up a dog does the dirty work for you, which adds an amusing dimension.	8
SHADOW OF THE BEAST	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Psychedelic graphics enhance this otherwise poor platformer that becomes very monotonous.	5
SHADOW OF THE BEAST II	Electronic Arts	£39.99	This sequel combines teasing puzzles with atmospheric and mystical graphics.	7
SHINING IN THE DARKNESS	Sega	£44.99	Hugely addictive, with fantastic graphics and very challenging gameplay.	8
SHINING FORCE	Sega	£44.99	12Mbit sequel to *Darkness*, featuring more intelligence and improved gameplay.	9
SHINOBI III	Sega	£34.99	Tremendous platform adventure with loads of pick-ups and plenty of ninja magic.	8
SHOVE-IT		Import	As the title implies, you literally shove things into where they belong. How dull...	3
SIDE POCKET	Sega	£34.99	Uneventful pool simulation. The tables are dull but a few trick games and extra options liven it up.	6
SLIMEWORLD		Import	Todd has to escape the planet of slimy surroundings. Too green to make this bearable.	6
SOKOBHAN		Import	Not much fun as you move crates around a warehouse. Like working at Tesco.	5
SOL-FEACE		Import	A CD conversion without the sound quality. A very average shoot-'em-up.	5

title	producer	price	comment	rating
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	Sega	£34.99	A bit easy now, but still the first truly outstanding Mega Drive game.	8
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2	Sega	£39.99	Best game of 1992, this time Sonic has a mate, and again Sonic's miles ahead of the rest.	9
SPACE HARRIER II	Sega	£34.99	Awkward playing view and poor sound don't help this weak game.	5
SPACE INVADERS '90		Import	Classic game updated. Still holds all the magic, but lacks the polish.	6
SPEEDBALL II	Virgin	£39.99	Techno-rugby for the insane – pitch and players are both superb giving a futuristic feel.	9
SPIDER-MAN	Sega	£39.99	Strong story screens and very tough gameplay on this brilliant platform beat-'em-up.	8
SPLATTERHOUSE 2	Namco	£39.95	Eight stages of blood-thirsty and totally outrageous graphics, combined with equally sadistic music.	8
SPLATTERHOUSE 3	Namco	Import	More gruesome and gory goings-on in the land where Jason Vorhees is king.	8
SPORTS TALK BASEBALL	Sega	£39.95	Strong sim based on *Montana II* speech system. Works well, excellent graphics and great fun.	8
STAR CRUISER		Import	Completely unplayable due to Japanese text. For language students only.	3
STARFLIGHT	Electronic Arts	£49.99	Deep space mining is the name of this game. Plenty of combat and strategy.	8
STEEL EMPIRE	Acclaim	£39.95	Horizontal shoot-'em-up with huge sprites, which tends to become monotonous.	5
STEEL TALONS	Domark	£39.99	Chopper combat at a lower level. Not exactly *Desert Strike*.	5
STORMLORD	Ballistic	Import	Adventure game with intriguing but not difficult puzzles	7
STREET SMART	Sega	£34.99	Beat-'em-up with limited gameplay due to the small array of martial arts moves.	6
STREETS OF RAGE	Sega	£34.99	Beat-'em-up that was well-hyped but lacks challenge. Moves and sound FX make up for this.	8
STREETS OF RAGE II	Sega	£44.99	16Mbit cart which has been used to its full potential. Teamplay and versus modes make it worthwhile.	9
STRIDER	Sega	£44.99	All stages bar the last are easily completed. Held together by colourful graphics and smooth sprites.	8
SUNSET RIDERS	Konami	£39.99	Authentic cowboy and indian action on this platform shooter that shouldn't be ignored.	8
SUPERMAN	Virgin	£39.99	Pretty difficult which in turn makes it frustrating. A bit of a disappointment.	6
SUPER AIRWOLF		Import	Also known as *Crossfire*, this shoot-'em-up packs a punch. No TV tie-in evident, though.	7
SUPER BATTLETANK		Import	Tank sim that may appeal to your basic instincts, ie, point, shoot, blow up.	3
SUPER FANTASY ZONE	Sega	£34.99	Big guardians and small sprites. Good fun for a while.	6
SUPER HANG-ON	Sega	£34.99	Exciting motor-biking from this arcade classic.	8
SUPER HIGH IMPACT		Import	Good animation on this American football sim, but as usual sad lack of challenge.	6
SUPER HQ		Import	Arcade conversion from *Chase HQ* that doesn't live up to expectations.	4
SUPER HYDLIDE	Sega	£34.99	Very boring RPG that has nothing new to offer.	4
SUPER KICK OFF	US Gold	£39.99	Good in its day but now looks dated next to *J League*.	8
SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL	Sega	£34.99	Offers enough options to stave off boredom. One of the decent attempts at the sport.	8
SUPER MILITARY		Import	Good war game that sets the scene for a challenging confrontation.	8
SUPER MONACO GP	Sega	£34.99	Everything else is here, just lacks a two-player mode.	8
SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX II	Sega	£49.99	Good graphics, but that's it on this rehash of the first game. A real con at £50!	4
SUPER OFF ROAD	Ballistic	£29.99	All the sights and sounds are here on this 4x4 truck racing game. Great fun, cute trucks.	8
SUPER REAL BASKETBALL	Sega	£34.99	Neat sound FX and good graphics scoring sequences which make this enjoyable to play.	8
SUPER SMASH TV	Acclaim	£29.99	Highly *acclaim*ed arcade game that is very tough. Bit flickery, though.	8
SUPER THUNDER BLADE	Sega	£34.99	A shoot-'em-up that's claim to fame is the two views – all it does is confuse gameplay.	6
SUPER VOLLEYBALL		Import	Side-view with super scrolling makes this a good, albeit odd, interpretation.	8
SUPER WRESTLEMANIA	Flying Edge	£39.99	Addictive two-player action in the ultimate WWF simulation.	8
SWORD OF SODAN	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Difficult to get into with sluggish gameplay.	3
SWORD OF VERMILION	Sega	£49.99	Massive RPG which is incredibly tough. Fantastic graphics, large landscape.	8
TAILSPIN	Sega	£39.99	Boring platformer with an additional shoot-'em-up section. Bad Disney licence – shock!	6
TASK FORCE HARRIER EX		Import	Poor American offering that has dodgy graphics and gameplay.	5
TAZ MANIA	Sega	£39.95	Ambient backdrops and a charismatic main sprite give this game that something special.	9
TEAM USA BASKETBALL	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Dodgy sound FX and animation let down the graphics.	6
TECHNOCOP		Import	Racing sim combined with platform investigation scenes. Naff conversion of a naff original.	2
TECMO WORLD CUP '93	Sega	£34.99	Best played on the two- player mode for the most fun. Limiting moves.	7
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	Konami	£39.99	Great beat-'em-up, with bright backdrops and colourful turtles.	8
TEL TEL BASEBALL		Import	Terry Venables baseball tie-in – er, no sorry, funny Jap baseball game. Whoops, sorry, Tel.	6
TERMINATOR, THE	Virgin	£39.99	Packed with stills from the movie linking the four stages. Great blasting but too short.	8
TERMINATOR 2: THE ARCADE GAME	Acclaim	£39.99	Use either the joypad or the Menacer. Nine stages of fantastic virtual realism.	9
TEST DRIVE 2: THE DUEL	Ballistic	£34.99	The success of this game lies in the car handling which feels just like the real thing.	8
THUNDER FORCE II	Sega	£34.99	Strong challenge and overall presentation with some super backdrops.	7
THUNDER FORCE III	Sega	£34.99	Better than the original, this will have you playing for ages.	8
THUNDER FORCE IV	Sega	£39.99	Magnificent graphics and gameplay. Shoot-'em-up at the peak.	9

THUNDERFOX		Import	Check machine compatibility, but you're not missing anything.	
THUNDER PRO WRESTLING		Import	Limited moves means it's not much fun to play	
TIGER HELI		Import	Totally uninspiring helicopter game with dubious graphics.	
TINY TOON ADVENTURES	Konami	£39.99	Wonderful adventure that borrows much from the Warner Bros cartoons.	
TOEJAM & EARL	Sega	£34.99	Cartoon graphics and some brilliant sampled sound. Weird sense of humour.	
TOKI	Sega	£34.99	Great platformer with arcade-quality graphics. Bit too easy, though.	
TORA! TORA! TORA!		Import	Average shoot-'em-up which has little to offer if you want something different.	
TOXIC CRUSADERS		Import	Take control of Toxie and help him in this dire scrolling arcade adventure.	
TRAMPOLINE TERROR		Import	Nothing to do with trampolines. Not even bouncy or fun.	
TROUBLE SHOOTER		Import	Female stars in Forgotten Worlds type game. Makes for a good looking and colourful game.	3
TRUXTON	Sega	£34.99	A normal but easy vertical shoot-'em-up that's immense fun. *Tatsujin* on import.	5
TURBO OUT RUN	Sega	£39.99	*Out Run* was brilliant, this sadly lacks any turbo charge.	2
TURRICAN	Ballistic	£34.99	The innovative shooting technique adds a new twist to this platform shoot-'em-up.	9
TWIN COBRA	Sega	£34.99	Control a helicopter through dreary battle zones.	8
TWIN HAWK	Sega	£34.99	Average shoot-'em-up that is very easy.	8
TWINKLE TALE		Import	A psychedelic Japanese shoot-'em-up which plays well. Intense and challenging.	7
TWO CRUDE DUDES	Sega	£34.99	The stars are two muscle men who are hell-bent on going on the rampage. Destructive fun.	8
ULTIMATE QIX		Import	Plays like Othello, but totally rubbish with very few console-inspired surprises.	4
UNDEADLINE		Import	Zombie level guardians add humour to this shoot-'em-up. Wicked title.	8
UNIVERSAL SOLDIER	Accolade	£39.99	Not as tough as it looks, but super gameplay. Could be called Turrican 2.	8
VALIS		Import	The original hack-'em-till-they-die arcade adventure. Worth a playtest for a laugh.	7
VALIS III		Import	Looks great but is incredibly boring. Should have left it at *Valis*.	6
VAPOR TRAIL		Import	Fun to play with some very fast gameplay, but not enough challenges.	5
VERYTEX		Import	Scrolling shooter that is actually quite good. Tough guardians and enemies throughout.	8
WANI WANI WORLD		Import	Psychedelic graphics, with very addictive two-player mode. Like *Bubble Bobble*.	8
WARDNER SPECIAL		Import	Usual elements, but with sheer lack of detail from this poor arcade shooter conversion.	4
WARSONG		Import	Wargame where you'll have to be patient to appreciate it. One for armchair generals.	8
WHEEL OF FORTUNE	Gametek	Import	Absolute rubbish with 4500 uninteresting questions	2
WHERE IN THE WORLD IS...?	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Edutainment game that tends to become boring for the experienced adventurer.	6
WHERE IN TIME IS...?	Electronic Arts	£49.99	More successful attempt than its predecessor.	8
WHIP RUSH	Sega	£34.99	Very playable and extremely fast shoot-'em-up with good gameplay. Dodgy title.	8
WINTER CHALLENGE	Ballistic	£39.99	Eight different events make up this snow-laden epic. Very original.	8
WONDER BOY III	Sega	£34.99	Two-player game is brilliant fun and very interactive. Recommended for two players only.	7
WONDER BOY IV	Sega	£39.99	More fun than the original, but not an all-time classic.	8
WONDER BOY V	Sega	£39.99	Should have stopped by now, no difference really.	7
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	US Gold	£39.99	Has speech samples, but nowhere near PGA Golf.	6
WORLD CUP ITALIA 90	Sega	£29.99	Limited moves, but still pretty good. Reasonably priced which is definitely a plus point.	8
WORLD OF ILLUSION	Sega	£39.99	Outstanding Disney graphics and animation, which will keep young and old compelled.	9
WRESTLE WAR	Sega	£34.99	Getting the moves worked out with your joypad is more hard work than the actual game.	7
XDR		Import	Mysterious shoot-'em-up, mainly due to Jap text base. Mediocre gameplay.	5
XENON II	Virgin	£39.99	Excellent shoot-'em-up that falters slightly with occasional screen slowdown.	8
X-MEN	Sega	£34.99	Should really have done a straight conversion from the arcade, but it's still okay.	7
Y'S 3: WANDERERS FROM Y'S	Sega		In-depth RPG which offers a considerable challenge. Fans of tough games will love it.	8
ZANY GOLF	Electronic Arts	£39.99	More insane than crazy golf at the seaside. Fun game with very polished presentation.	9
ZERO WING	Sega	£39.95	Horizontal shooter which is flawed by its small graphics and ease of completion.	7
ZOOM	Sega	£29.99	Cheap and cheerful puzzler. Average graphics and sound. Soon gets boring and frustrating	4

MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD MEGA CD

ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH, THE	Dynamix	Import	Pretty wacky adventures of a young lad who mucks about all the time.	8
AFTER BURNER III	CRS	Import	What a waste of a good CD. Why bother sticking this ageing game on it?	4
BATMAN RETURNS	Sega	£39.99	Basically the cart version, but the added music is superb – well worth paying extra.	7
BLACK HOLE ASSAULT	Sega	£39.99	Heavy Nova wasn't much cop, and this is little improvement over it.	5
CHUCK ROCK	Sony	Import	Seems strange to stick this Mega Drive game on CD. Not bad though.	7
COBRA COMMAND	Wolfteam	£39.99	Amazingly popular on import as Thunder Storm FX. Great visuals, limited gameplay.	7
EARNEST EVANS	Wolfteam	Import	One of the first, and still pretty impressive both visually and aurally.	7
FUNKY HORROR BAND	Sega	Import	Take the band on a trip through a strange land. Funny but incomprehensible.	5
HEAVY NOVA	Micronet	Import	An early robot beat-'em-up that is laboriously slow.	5
HOOK	Sony	Import	Beautifully enchanting story, with glorious visuals, but poor gameplay.	7
JAGUAR XJ220	Sega	£44.99	Very disappointing race game. Waste of a CD, get Lotus on cart instead.	4
KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sony	Import	Odd concept disc where you cut and edit your own videos. Limited appeal.	5
MARKY MARK: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sony	Import	Better quality than Kris Kross – pity Marky Mark's a dunce.	6
PRINCE OF PERSIA	Sega	£39.99	Another Mega Drive cart conversion. Very difficult, but looks and sounds impressive.	7
NIGHT TRAP	Sega	£49.99	The first of a new era of CD movie games. Big and very challenging.	8
RISE OF THE DRAGON	Dynamix	Import	Superbly atmospheric adventure puts you in the shoes of Blade hunter PI. Excellent.	8
ROAD AVENGER	Wolfteam	£39.99	Official version of Road Blaster FX. Looks fine, but allows little control over what happens.	7
ROBO ALESTE	Compile	Import	Looks great, with the obligatory intro screens, but is just a shoot-'em-up.	5
SEGA CLASSICS: ARCADE	Sega	n/a	Golden Axe, Super Monaco GP, Columns, Streets of Rage and The Revenge of Shinobi.	7
SHERLOCK HOLMES	Sega	£44.99	Quite an amusing attempt at a mystery game. Only three cases to solve, though.	8
SOL-FEACE	Sega	£39.99	The original CD shoot-'em-up with mad music, wicked effects and tough gameplay.	8
Super League CD	Sega	Import	Grimola. This is one waste of good plastic. Looks dire and plays like a brick.	3
TIME GAL	Wolfteam	£44.99	Tons of ways to die in this Jappy cartoon adventure. Perfect difficulty ensures long-term play.	8
WONDER DOG	Sega/JVC	Import	A great game, admittedly, but why stick this on Mega-CD? Nothing exploits the format.	8
WOLFCHILD	Sega	£39.99	A freak experiment turns into disaster as the inventor is kidnapped. Tedious and predictable stuff.	6

RECOMMENDED

So many titles, some good, some not so good. Our own MPs pick the games they most regularly slam into their machines and explain why you should be doing the same.

STEVE PLAYS: PGA TOUR GOLF II

Being a bit of a golf fan with my own handicap playing off 10, I've played a good few golf games but have never been overly impressed. *PGA Tour Golf II* is purely something else. The first game was excellent and saw off all the pussy challengers. *PGA II* is pretty much the same, but with three more courses, and heightened and refined graphics, it surpasses the competition.

The game itself is the ultimate in relaxation. With the delicious four-player option, you can whack on the Ambient House music, switch on the Lava lamp and settle down to an afternoon of pure pleasure with your mates. The save option always proves invaluable if the game's going on too long. The only bad thing I can say about it is that... nope, sorry, it's perfect!

DOM PLAYS: HARD DRIVIN'

Yes, I know this wasn't the best received driving game on the Mega Drive, but as far as I'm concerned it is one of few games that actually allows you to do anything you want to in the game's environment. Admittedly, there are only two actual tracks you can drive around, but, with a bit of imagination, you can drive around the tracks backwards, play chicken with the lorries, swerve in and out of the houses, and basically chuck the car around just like a normal car.

The Duel: Test Drive II is the only game that comes close to the realism of *Hard Drivin'*, but that severely restricts where you drive and what you do. When it comes to driving simulations, nothing comes close to the speed, accuracy and, essentially, feel of *Hard Drivin'*. I just wish someone would convert *Race Drivin'!*

DAVE PLAYS: NHLPA HOCKEY

This game is permanently plugged into my Mega Drive. As an ex-league ice hockey player I just can't stop playing what I believe to be the most comprehensive and accurate sports simulation ever.

Containing the speed and aggression of the world's fastest team game, both puck and players shoot about the rink at a frantic rate. Precision control, careful timing and calculated special plays frequently result in spectacular goals that send the net bulging, klaxons screaming and lights flashing. Add to this real-life NHL teams, individual players with their own characteristics, a tournament, a league and the best action replay function ever seen in a Mega Drive game and you have a cart that is worth every hard-earned penny of anybody's money.

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MEGA POWER

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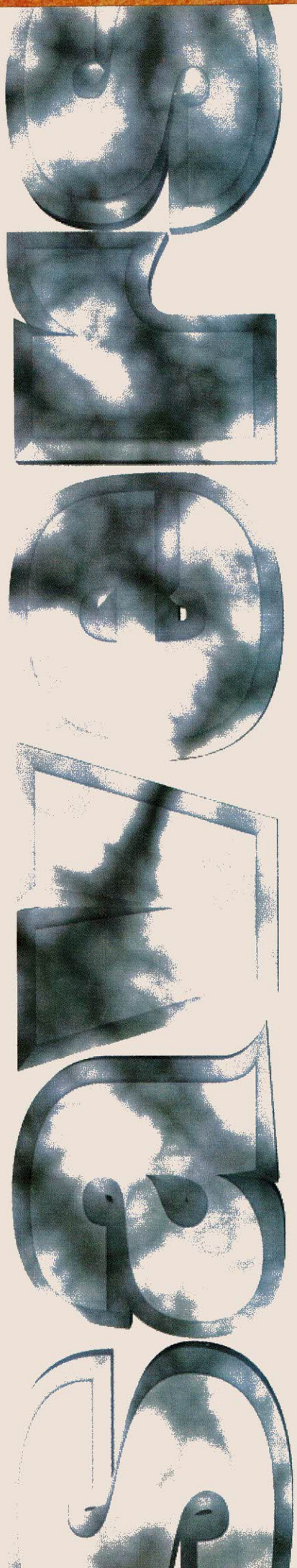

F1

OVERALL 07

Power review ---------pages 26-28

"For the ultimate zoom around a race track, you'll find it hard to beat Domark's innovative *F1*, officially licensed from FIA. If racing around against the computer is too difficult for you, you can always try your hand in the split-screen two-player option. "

power saver price -------£44.00

ULTIMATE SOCCER

OVERALL 05

Power review ---------pages 54-56

"Sega have turned football on its head with this eye-scorchingly fast soccer extravaganza. The extensive options allow you to play the game you want to play the way you want it – even on an indoor pitch. Packed with humour and excitement."

power saver price -------£39.00

TECHNOCLASH

OVERALL 08

Power review ---------pages 20-23

"Play a spell-wielding wizard who has to use all his magic to resist the impending onslaught of technology in the form on the Engine Men. This is a great mix of traditional RPG and shoot-'em-up elements resulting in an adventure for the Nineties."

power saver price -------£44.00

JUNGLE STRIKE

OVERALL 09

Power review ---------pages 38-41

"If you thought *Desert Strike* was a blast then this is definitely for you. Few other games on the Mega Drive are packed with as much excitement and variety as this. EA have taken the original, redesigned it, added sparkle and produced another winner. "

power saver price -------£44.00

COMPETITION PRO (SERIES II) £13.99

DUALIST £28.99

SG PROPAD £14.99

VOYAGER CONTROL PAD £14.99

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S ometimes you just need that little something extra to really punish those games. Here are a few suggestions.

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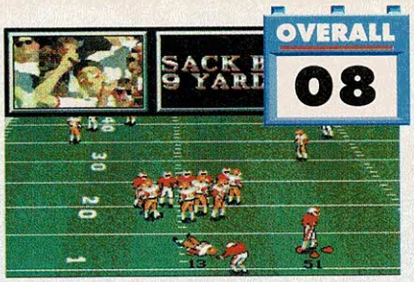
J LEAGUE PRO STRIKER

Power review ---------pageS 50-53

"If you want the best football on any console, then but this. It may be a Japanese game, with foreign menus and text, but it is undoubtedly the most playable and accurate soccer game around. Get the Sega Tap for frantic four-player action. "

power saver price -------£40.00

BILL WALSH FOOTBALL

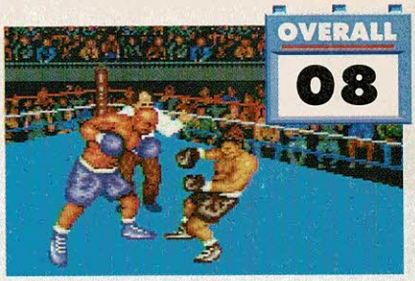


Power review ---------pages 34-37

"Bill Walsh follows in the steps of John Madden, who produced the most successful series of American football games ever. Here, EA have completely redesigned the engine of the game and added a whole new angle with the use of the EA Four-Way Play."

power saver price -------£44.00

MUHAMMAD ALI'S



Power review ---------pages 46-49

"Who's the heavyweight champion of the world? This cart is, actually. Virgin have toppled the likes of *"Buster" Douglas* and *Evander Holyfield* by creating one of the most bruising and brutal Mega Drive games ever. Two-player action is manic. "

power saver price -------£44.00

GENERAL CHAOS

Power review ---------pageS 29-32

"If you love multi-player games, you're gonna find it hard to top this for pure exhilarating excitement. The adrenaline will be pumping as you try to move your merry band of soldiers around the screen before they get frazzled by the enemy. Utilises the EA Four-Way Play. "

power saver price -------£44.00

BATMAN RETURNS CD

Power review ---------pages 42-45

"The Mega Drive game was a simple, albeit attractive, platform game. With the use of more space on the CD version, Sega have added a great driving section and some superb music. This game is tough though, so be prepared for some very late and frustrating nights. "

power saver price -------£39.00

ECCO THE DOLPHIN CD

Power review ---------pages 57-59

"The ultimate ambient game for eco-friendly Mega Drive ocean explorers. The CD version has over 30 levels (more than the cart version) and includes a terrific Spenser Nilsen soundtrack that reverberates from the Mega-CD throughout the game."

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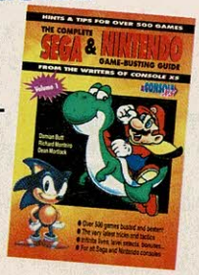

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POWER charts

HIGH STREET CHARTS

Compiled with the help of HMV, Our Price and Virgin.

mega drive

position | last month | weeks in chart | game title

1 | **(-)** | **1** | **Cool Spot**

Follow the adventures of the 7-UP's Spot in Virgin's summer scorcher.

2 | **(-)** | **1** | **Super Kick Off**

US Gold's unplayable conversion of Anco's top computer footy game.

3 | **(-)** | **1** | **Flashback**

Super smooth animation in one of the year's best platform adventures.

4 | **(-)** | **1** | **Tiny Toon Adventures**

Buster Bunny and his cartoon pals provide rampant arcade adventure.

5 | **(-)** | **1** | **Bulls vs Blazers**

Third in the series of ultra-accurate replays of NBA play-offs from EA.

6 | **(-)** | **1** | **PGA Tour Golf 2**

Uprated and much better version takes you around America's top courses.

7 | **(-)** | **1** | **Jungle Strike**

Popular follow-up to *Desert Strike* pits you against Ortega's ruthless son.

8 | **(-)** | **1** | **Fatal Fury**

Weak beat-'em-up with little challenge – many moves to conquer, though.

9 | **(-)** | **1** | **Ecco the Dolphin**

Much-lauded and hyped ocean adventure; Sega's attempt to reinvent Flipper.

10 | **(-)** | **1** | **Micro Machines**

Codemasters' table-top racing game; their first cart for the Mega Drive.

mega-cd

1 | **(-)** | **1** | **Road Avenger**

Official version of the original futuristic Wolfteam racer *Road Blaster FX*.

2 | **(-)** | **1** | **Jaguar XJ220**

Core/Sega's poor, unexploited attempt to put a fast track racer on CD.

3 | **(-)** | **1** | **Sherlock Holmes**

Interesting concept game that fails to ignite the expected intrigue and mystery.

4 | **(-)** | **1** | **Black Hole Assault**

Much better beat-'em-up than its predecessor, *Heavy Nova*, but boring.

5 | **(-)** | **1** | **Prince of Persia**

Not much extra to the cart version, only a soundtrack and cartoon intro.

INDEPENDENT CHARTS

Compiled with the help of Video Games Centre and Lansdowne computers.

mega drive

position | last month | weeks in chart | game title

1 | **(-)** | **1** | **Cool Spot**

Dave Perry's beautiful, humorous adventure in search of ultimate coolness.

2 | **(-)** | **1** | **Flashback**

US Gold's conversion of the successful Delphine computer adventure.

3 | **(-)** | **1** | **J League Pro Striker**

Totally realistic and very playable tie-in for the start of the Japanese league.

4 | **(-)** | **1** | **Andre Agassi Tennis**

He's out of Wimbledon, shaved his chest and now causing havoc on Sega.

5 | **(-)** | **1** | **Super Kick Off**

Simple conversion capitalizes on the original's successful footballing format.

6 | **(-)** | **1** | **Mutant League Football**

EA's *Madden Football* with few additions that serve to confuse not entertain.

7 | **(-)** | **1** | **Streets of Rage II**

Sega's traditional beat-'em-up with towering characters and interesting moves.

8 | **(-)** | **1** | **Tiny Toon Adventures**

The shrunken cartoon characters provide much fun in Konami's adventure.

9 | **(-)** | **1** | **Amazing Tennis**

David Crane's new perspective on tennis proves a worthy challenger to *Andre Agassi*.

10 | **(-)** | **1** | **Micro Machines**

They are small, they are fast and they are living inside your Sega – worried?

mega-cd

1 | **(-)** | **1** | **Final Fight CD**

The ultimate brutal beat-'em-up on any compact disc format is a must-buy.

2 | **(-)** | **1** | **Ecco the Dolphin**

Complete with Q-sound and a handful of extra levels, the dolphin dives in.

3 | **(-)** | **1** | **Batman Returns**

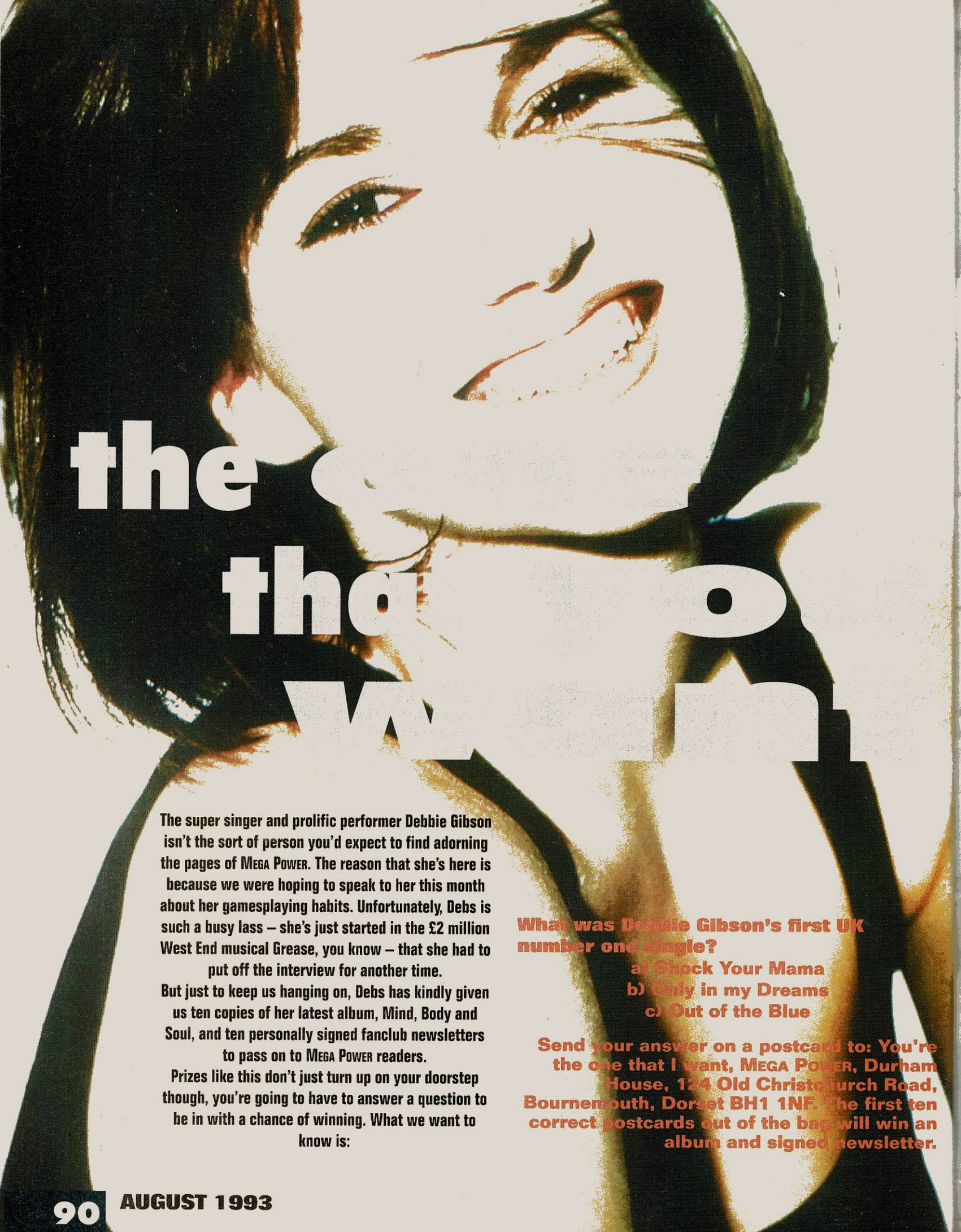
Including a tough driving section, the draw here is the great CD soundtrack.

4 | **(-)** | **1** | **Night Trap**

The controversial, but over-hyped, undercover espionage adventure from Sega

5 | **(-)** | **1** | **Time Gal**

The cute and crazy girl from Japan squeaks her through attractive timezones.



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W

The super singer and prolific performer Debbie Gibson isn't the sort of person you'd expect to find adorning the pages of MEGA POWER. The reason that she's here is because we were hoping to speak to her this month about her gamesplaying habits. Unfortunately, Debs is such a busy lass – she's just started in the £2 million West End musical Grease, you know – that she had to put off the interview for another time.

But just to keep us hanging on, Debs has kindly given us ten copies of her latest album, Mind, Body and Soul, and ten personally signed fanclub newsletters to pass on to MEGA POWER readers.

Prizes like this don't just turn up on your doorstep though, you're going to have to answer a question to be in with a chance of winning. What we want to know is:

What was Debbie Gibson's first UK number one single?

a) Shock Your Mama
b) Only in my Dreams
c) Out of the Blue

Send your answer on a postcard to: You're the one that I want, MEGA POWER, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF. The first ten correct postcards out of the bag will win an album and signed newsletter.

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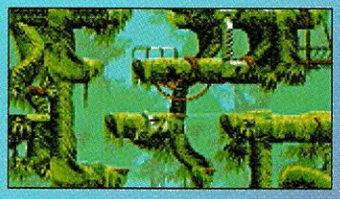

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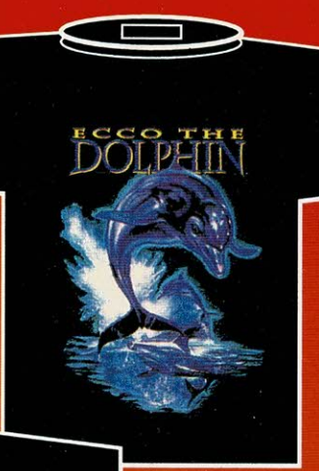

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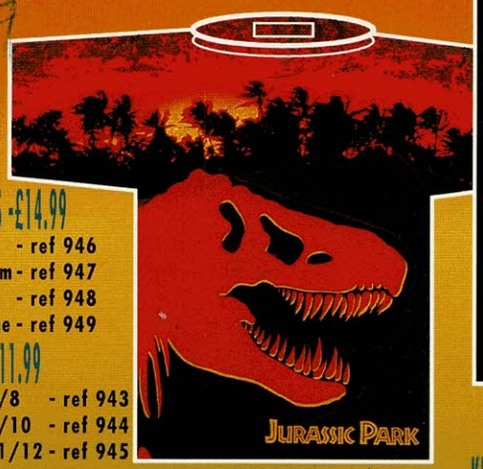

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